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LITTLE KAREN AND HER BABY.

BY S. C. W.

THE cottage in which little Karen lived stood high up on the hill-side, close to the edge of a great forest. It was a strange, lonely place for a young wife, almost a girl, to be so happy in; but Karen was not afraid of the forest, and never thought her home lonely, not even when the strong winds blew in winter-time, and brought the far-off baying of wolves from the mountains beyond. Her husband, her boy, her housewifely cares, her spinning-wheel and her needle, kept her busy all day long, and she was as cheerful as busy. The cottage was not large, but it was strongly built of heavy beams and stones. Its low walls seemed to hug and clasp the ground, as if for protection, in time of storm. The casement windows, with their very small panes of thick glass, let in little sun, but all summer long they stood open, and in winter, what with the crackling fire, the hum of the wheel, and Karen's bright face, the living-room never looked dark, and, for all its plainness, had an air of quaint comfort about it. Fritz, Karen's husband, who was skillful with tools, had ornamented the high-backed chair, the press for clothes, and the baby's oaken cradle, with beautiful carving, of which little Karen was exceedingly proud. She loved her cottage, she loved the great wood close by; her lonely life was delightful to her, and she had not the least wish to exchange it for the toy-like village in the valley below.

But Karen was unlike other people, the neighbors said, and the old gossips were wont to shake

their heads, and mutter that there was a reason for this unlikeness, and that all good Christians ought to pity and pray for the poor child.

Long, long ago, said these gossips,—so long that nobody now could remember exactly when it was,—Karen's great-great-great-grandfather (or perhaps *his* grandfather—who could tell?), when hunting in the high mountains, met a beautiful, tiny maiden, so small and light that a man could easily carry her in the palm of one hand. This maiden he fell in love with, and he won her to be his wife. She made a good wife; kept the house as bright as new tin; and spun on her wheel linen thread so fine that mortal eye could hardly see it. But a year and a day from the time of her marriage, she went out to walk in the wood, and never came back any more! The reason of this was, that she was a gnomide,—daughter of one of the forest gnomes,—and when her own people encountered her thus alone, they detained her, and would not suffer her to return to her husband. The baby she left in the cradle grew to be a woman,—bigger than her gnome mother, it is true, but still very small; and all the women of the race have been small since that time. Witness little Karen herself, whose head only came up to the shoulder of her tall Fritz. Then her passion for woods and solitary places,—her beautiful swift spinning, her hair, of that peculiar pale white-brown shade,—all these were proofs of the drops of unearthly blood which ran in her veins. Gnomes always had white hair.

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This was because they lived in holes and dark places. Even a potato would throw out white leaves if kept in a cellar,—everybody knew that,—and the gossips ending thus, would shake their heads again, and look very wise.

Karen had heard these stories, and laughed at them. No fairy or gnome had ever met her eyes in the woods she loved so well; and as for hair, Rosel Pilaff's, and Gretchen Erl's too, was almost as pale as hers. Blonde hair is common enough in the German mountains. Her little boy—bless him!—had downy rings which promised to become auburn in time, the color of his father's beard. She did not believe in the gnome story a bit.

But there came a time when she almost wished to believe it, for the gnomes are said to be wise folk, and little Fritz fell ill of a strange disease, which neither motherly wisdom nor motherly nursing was able to reach. Each day left him thinner and weaker, till he seemed no more than half his former size. His very face looked strange as it lay on the cradle-pillow, and Karen was at her wit's end to know what to do.

"I will go to the village and ask Mother Klaus to come and see the child," said Fritz. "She may know of a remedy."

"It will be of no use," declared Karen, sadly. "She went to the Berards', and the baby died, and to Heinrichs', and little Marie died. But go, Fritz!—only come back soon, lest our angel take flight while you are away!"

She almost pushed him from the door, in her impatience to have him return.

A while after, when the baby had wailed himself to sleep, she went again to the door to look down the path into the valley. It was too soon to hope for Fritz, but the movement seemed a relief to her restlessness. It was dusk, not dark,—a sweet, mild dusk, with light enough left to show the tree-branches as they met and waved against the dim yellow sky. Deep shadows lay on the moss-beds and autumn flowers which grew beneath; only a faint perfume here and there told of their presence, and the night was very near.

Too unhappy to mind the duskiness, Karen wandered a little way up the wood-path, and sat down on the root of an old oak, so old that the rangers had given it the name of "Herr Grandfather." It was only to clear her brimming eyes that she sat down. She wiped them with her kerchief, and, with one low sob, was about to rise, when she became aware that somebody was standing at her side.

This somebody was a tiny old woman, with a pale, shadowy, but sweet face, framed in flossy white hair. She wore a dark, foreign-looking robe; a pointed hood, edged with fur, was pulled

over her head; and the hand which she held out as she spoke was as white as the stalk of celery.

"What is the matter, my child?" she asked, in a thin, rustling voice, which yet sounded pleasantly, because it was kind.

"My baby is so sick," replied Karen, weeping.

"How sick?" inquired the old woman, anxiously. "Is it cold? Is it fever? Do its eyes water? My baby once had a cold, and her eyes —" She stopped abruptly.

"His eyes do not water," said Karen, who felt singularly at home with the stranger. "But his head is hot, and his hands; he sleeps ill, and for these ten days has hardly eaten. He grows thinner and whiter every hour, and wails whenever he is awake. Oh, what am I doing? I must go back to him,"—and, as she spoke, she jumped from her seat.

"One minute!" entreated the little old woman. "Has he pain anywhere?"

"He cries when I move his head," said Karen, hurrying on.

The stranger went too, keeping close beside her in a swift, soundless way.

"Take courage, liebchen, child to her who was child of my child's child," she said. "Weep not, my darling. I will send you help. Out of the wisdom of the earth shall come aid for the little dear one."

"What do you mean?" cried Karen, stopping short, in her surprise.

But the old woman did not answer. She had vanished. Had the wind blown her away?"

"How could I wander so far? How could I leave my baby? Wicked mother that I am!" exclaimed Karen, in sudden terror, as she ran into the cottage.

But nothing seemed disturbed, and no one had been there. The baby lay quietly in his cradle, and the room was quite still, save for the hiss of the boiling pot, and the fall of an ember on the hearth. Gradually her heart ceased its terrified beating; a sense of warmth and calm crept over her, her eyes drooped, and, seated at the cradle-foot, she fell asleep in her chair.

Whether it was an hour or a minute that she slept, she never knew. Slowly and dimly her waking senses crept back to her; but though she heard and saw and understood, she could neither stir nor speak. Two forms were bending over the cradle, forms of little men, venerable and shadowy, with hair like snow, and blanched, pale hands, like her visitor of the afternoon. They did not look at Karen, but consulted together above the sleeping child.

"It is here, brother, and here," said one, laying his finger gently on the baby's head and heart.

"Does it lie too deep for our reaching?" asked the second, anxiously.

"No. The little herb you know of is powerful."

"And the crystal dust *you* know of is more powerful still."

Then they took out two minute caskets, and Karen saw them open the baby's lips, and each drop in a pinch of some unknown substance.

"He is of ours," whispered one, "more of ours than any of them have been since the first."

"He has the gift of the far sight," said the other, lightly touching the closed eyes, "the divining glance and the lucky finger."

"I read in him the apprehension of metals," said the second old man, "the sense of hidden treasures, the desire to penetrate."

"We will teach him how the waters run, and what the birds say—yes, and the way in and the way out!"

"Put the charm round his neck, brother."

Then Karen saw the little men tie a bright object round the baby's neck. She longed to move, but still she sat mute and powerless, while the odd figures passed round the cradle, slowly at first, then faster and faster, crooning as they went a song which was like wind in branches, and of which this scrap lodged in her memory :

"Eyes to pierce the darkness through,
Wit to grasp a hidden clue,
Heart to feel and hand to do,
These the gnomes have given to you."

So the song and the circling movement went on, faster and more fast, and round and round, till Karen's head swam and her senses seemed to spin in a whirling dance, and she knew no more, till roused by the opening of the door, and Fritz's voice exclaiming: "Come in, Dame Klaus—come in! Karen! Where are you, wife? Ah, here she is, fast asleep, and the little man is asleep too."

"I am not asleep," said Karen, finding her voice with an effort. Then, to her husband's surprise, she began to weep bitterly. But, for all his urgings, she would not tell the cause, for she was afraid of Dame Klaus's tongue.

The dame shook her head over the sick baby. He was very bad, she said; still, she had brought through others as bad as he, and there was no telling. She asked for a saucepan, and began to brew a tea of herbs, while Karen, drawing her husband aside, told her wonderful tale in a whisper.

"Thou wert dreaming, Karen; it is nothing but a dream," declared the astounded Fritz.

"No, no," protested Karen. "It was not a dream. Baby will be well again, and great things are to happen! You will see! The little men know!"

"Little men! Oh, Karen! Karen!" exclaimed Fritz.

But he said no more, for Karen, bending over the cradle, lifted the strange silver coin which was tied round the baby's neck, and held it up to him with a smile. A silver piece is not a dream, as every one knows; so Fritz, though incredulous, held his tongue, and neither he nor Karen said a word of the matter to Mother Klaus.

Baby was better next day. It was all the herb-tea, Mother Klaus declared, and she gained great credit for the cure.

This happened years ago. Little Fritz grew to be a fine man, sound and hearty, though never as tall as his father. He was a lucky lad too, the villagers said, for his early taste for minerals caught the attention of a rich gentleman, who gave him great learning. Often when the mother sat alone at her wheel, a smile came to her lips, and she hummed low to herself the song of the little old men :

"Eyes to pierce the darkness through,
Wit to grasp the hidden clue,
Heart to feel and hand to do,
These the gnomes have given to you."



MAKING MAPLE SUGAR.

BY RUTH KENYON.

WINTER had been whistling around with his hands in his pockets a good three months and more; but the violets and daisies, tucked under a thick blanket of snow, had been kept from freezing. People call Winter a very cold, severe fellow; still there must be a tender spot in his heart some-

the branches told the trunks, and the trunks carried the news down to the roots. Maple-trees keep all their provisions in an underground cellar; so the roots finding that, sure enough, the ground was no longer frozen and hard, began to feel about, and sent out little rootlets that gathered up the



STIRRING THE SAP.

where, so kindly does he protect all the delicate plants.

But now the great warm-hearted old Sun was coming back, and Winter, afraid of his long bright days, ran off to the North Pole. A flock of blue-birds came to welcome their old friend, and one robin-redbreast ventured out early to sing him a song. A little warm breeze crept through Farmer Cheery's maple forest, awoke the trees from their long, long sleep, and they all began to shake hands and nod toward each other, whispering: "Good! Good! Here comes the Spring!"

Soon the warm air made them feel thirsty and faint; the tiny twigs complained to the branches;

good things,—just the kinds they knew maple twigs loved best. Does n't it seem funny that they can tell? The maples take one kind of food, the pines another, the birches another, and for each the rootlets pick out just the right kind from the same ground. As fast as the rootlets gathered the food, they sent it up to the branches—a very delicate, sweet drink; and still they sent more and more, the little twigs always taking the freshest, and sending back what was left over. The branches felt very much revived as they were fed, grew very social, and began to tell of the pretty red dresses they would put on before long; red for the cool spring days, and afterward green for hot

summer. They were merry planning their new wardrobes, I assure you; you could have heard it if you had had the right kind of ears.

Farmer Cheery came in from his barn chores.

"I say, wife, it's growing warm! Should n't wonder if the sap would run such weather as this; guess I must tap one tree and see."

So Farmer Cheery took his auger and went out into the maple orchard. It did n't take him long to make a little hole in one of the tree-trunks, and put in a little spout; nor was it many minutes before drop by drop came the sap.

"Ah! that's fine!" said Farmer Cheery, and he went home in haste. The next we saw of him, he was driving out into the orchard with a load of one hundred and fifty clean, bright, tin sap-buckets and one hundred and fifty fresh little troughs. Then, in each one of his hundred and fifty maple-trees he bored a hole and put a trough in, and a bucket beneath to catch the sap as it came dropping out.

"Did n't it starve the poor little branches waiting for their food?"

Oh, no! There was enough for them left,—all they needed to keep them very fresh and make them grow. So many, many pailfuls ran up and down every day, that the one Farmer Cheery took would hardly be missed.

Every morning and night for two or three weeks, the good farmer might be seen with his great tank, clean as clean could be, driving around to collect the sap that had run out. He knew that one reason why maple sugar is sometimes dark-colored is because the pails and tanks that hold the sap are not washed thoroughly; so he took great pains with his. He knew, too, that if any water gets in,

the sap must be boiled longer to make sugar of it, and the longer it is boiled the darker it grows; so, if he saw a storm coming, he collected all the sap, and turned the buckets upside down till the rain was over.

Farmer Cheery had a great iron pan, which would hold,—oh, I don't dare tell you how many pailfuls,—a great, great many; and this very large pan rested on some stone posts about two feet from the ground. Under this he built a fire, and into it he poured his sap, stirring it while it boiled almost all day long. When he drew it off, such beautiful clear sirup I don't believe you ever saw. This he did two or three times each week for nearly a month; after that, the sap was not as good for people to use, though just what the little twigs needed as they grew older.

Some of his sirup the farmer put up in cans to send to the cities; some of it he boiled more and more, so that it would be sugar when cooled. Then he poured it into pretty scolloped tins, to harden into the round cakes you like so much; and some of it his little grandchildren waxed on snow.

You don't know how that is?

Well, May packed a panful of snow, just as hard as she could crowd it in; then she smoothed off the top as even as a marble table, and she and Sally carried it to Grandpa Cheery, who dropped upon their snow a spoonful of the hot sirup here and there. The little thin, waxy sheets of suddenly cooled sirup, picked up with a fork and eaten as soon as cool, made an excellent luncheon; and the children tugged their pan of snow around to give every one a taste, declaring that "sugar-season" was the very best time in the year.

LUCK AND LABOR.

BY MRS. CAROLINE A. SOULE.

LUCK doth wait, standing idly at the gate—
Wishing, wishing all the day;
And at night, without a fire, without a light,
And before an empty tray,

Doth sadly say:

"To-morrow something may turn up;
To-night on wishes I must sup."

Labor goes, plowing deep the fertile rows—
Singing, singing all the day;
And at night, before the fire, beside the light,
And with a well-filled tray,
Doth gladly say:
"To-morrow I'll turn something up;
To-night on wages earned I sup."

CATHERN.

(A Sequel to "The Ash-Girl."*)

BY LUCY G. MORSE.

DOES anybody remember the little ash-girl, Cathern, who wanted a mother so much that she wandered up and down the streets, day in and day out, for a great many weeks, trying to find one? She had been laughed at, scolded and repulsed, until her courage nearly failed her; and the great hope in her heart grew less and less and at last seemed to be fading quite away, just as the color in her cheeks had done.

But now—now Mrs. Percy had opened her arms to the lonely child, and was resting the tired head upon her bosom. Only a few days before, a little golden head had rested there, and a face as pure as an angel's had lighted up with smiles in answer to the mother's look of love. But the angels had beckoned to the child and carried her to heaven with them, leaving the mother desolate. Thinking of all this, and looking down upon Cathern, Mrs. Percy saw that the sudden happiness had been too much for the poor child. The little face, looking so worn and white under a mat of dusky hair, but with the light of its new joy full upon it, lay quite unconscious. Very tenderly, with her heart aching for her own darling, Mrs. Percy carried this poor stranger child upstairs, and laid her upon the vacant bed.

It was several weeks before Cathern wakened from a delirium in which she seemed to be going over her weary wanderings again. At one time she would complain that the stones were cold, and hurt her feet; at another, that her bones ached; then, that she was hungry. Sometimes she would mistake Mrs. Percy, who watched over her almost constantly, for some one whom she had encountered in her search. "Wait! wait!" she would plead, pitifully. "Don't shut the door on me. I have n't got any mother, an' I wants one *so* bad!" Then she would cry, and in a moment say, bitterly: "No matter! A *reel* mother would n't drive me away, an' I'm goin' to git on to a boat an' go all over the world till I finds a reel, true mother!"

In this way, Mrs. Percy learned a great deal about Cathern's sufferings, and became so full of compassion for her, that her interest grew very strong. Again and again she thought over her impulsive promise to the child that she would be a mother to her, and wondered if it would be a difficult one to fulfill; but whenever she looked at Cathern, her wondering changed to pity, and she

said to herself: "Inasmuch as ye do it unto one of these little ones —"

Opposite the bed where Cathern lay, there hung upon the wall a beautiful portrait of the two who had died,—Mabel Percy and her father,—and the mother, looking at it, fancied that she saw in the child's eyes, which seemed to look down upon her from the picture, an earnest expression, which resembled the pleading look so intense upon the forlorn little beggar child's face when she had first seen it. It seemed as if Mabel were pleading for Cathern. That thought would make Mrs. Percy bend over the sick child, and try, with all her skill and patience, to restore her.

At last came the day when Cathern opened her eyes, gazed intently at Mrs. Percy for a moment, and then, with a radiant smile, put up her little wasted arms, and cried, joyfully:

"Mother!"

She was so happy that she did not notice how the face over her grew sad with a sudden pain at that word. She felt nothing but her own excess of joy, and innocently took for granted, on Mrs. Percy's part, all the feeling of a mother over the recovery of her child.

"I forgot all about it, mother," she said, brightly, with a low laugh. "I dreamed all the time that I was a-huntin' for you ag'in. Was n't that funny? An' it aint true at all! I has n't got to hunt any more, has I? Oh, I'm so glad! Aint you? But o' course you are, 'cause you have n't got any little girl now, 'cept me." Oh, the pain the mother felt at every word! But Cathern was quite unconscious of it, and went on, and on: "Aint you glad, too, you've got me? I knows you are, 'cause all the reel mothers ever I seen was glad with their little girls, an' called 'em every kind o' word they could think of. Nice names, I mean. O' course they would n't go to call 'em the things Biddy Dolan called me! *She* aint nobody's mother. An' you called me 'my darling,'—so I knows, ye see. The first mother I knowed said that. Mother! Mother! You'll call it me often, wont you?"

The pain in the mother's heart was very sharp just then, but the joy and trust in Cathern's were perfect; and the tones of her voice, weak from sickness, and very touching as she kept repeating this name she had never called any one before, were such as no true mother could have disap-

* For the first story, see ST. NICHOLAS for April, 1876; page 386.

pointed ; and this sorrowing one hid her face in the pillow, and whispered :

"I will, my darling."

"Oh, that's the beautifullest, the goodest thing of all !" cried the little one, in ecstasy. " You're the best of all the mothers,—I knows you are. Lift up your head, mother,—I wants to see you, an' you hides your face so I can't. Oh, mother ! mother ! you're a-feelin' bad, an' you wants to cry ! "

Here Cathern's voice changed to one of the tenderest pity, and, drawing down the mother's head, she patted and soothed it with her weak little hands as if it were a baby's, and she its comforter.

"There ! There, my mother !" she said. " Lay down close to me, an' I'll make you feel better. See how I can stroke you an' love you ? Yes, indeed I will ; an' by an' by you can go to sleep here, on my pillow, an' I'll watch you, an' I wont let nothing touch you nor wake you up till you're all rested. Is that what your other little girl'd do ? Yes, I knows she would. An' now she can't, you know. An' if she could ax me to do it for her, she would,—an' I will. She's beautifuller nor what I am, but when I gits well I'll do everything I can think of she'd be axin' me to. There ! Now you're cryin' really, mother ! You can hide your face agin mine, an' I wont let nobody see ye. Ye need n't try not to do it, neither, for it's dreadful hard to keep it in,—I knows it is ! "

Cathern had so often squeezed back the tears and swallowed sobs when they wanted to come out, that she understood at once the pain the mother felt in her effort at self-control. All through her little life, as far back as she could remember, she had been forced to do without things that she wanted bitterly, and she had been too lonely ever since the longing for a mother had seized her, not to feel now Mrs. Percy's intense longing for her daughter.

Her words and tender caresses touched Mrs. Percy to the heart, and, lifting her head presently, she kissed the sick child tenderly, and said, with a brighter look than Cathern had seen before :

"There ! You make me feel better, darling. You are a poor little waif who has strayed into my path, I think, because I need you as much as you need me. We will help each other, and it shall be good for us both that we have come together."

Then Mrs. Percy sat by the bed, and holding Cathern's feeble hand, told her gently about her own little daughter—how tenderly she had carried it for its first walk down the path to the spring at her country home, where the daisies smiled up at the wee dimpled stranger, and the quivering leaves

of the white-barked poplars winked down in baby's laughing face ; how baby had come to the city and grown into a happy little girl ; and how very still and lonely the house had seemed when, at last, the



BABY'S FIRST WALK.

bright eyes were shut forever. Listening to this, Cathern became perfectly quiet, and at last fell into a sweet sleep.

The cross waiters and indignant cooks who had shut the doors in the ash-girl's face would not have recognized her the following spring, when, restored to health, she was singing to herself one morning while she watered some flowers in the large bay-window of the dining-room. She was dressed in a

blue soft woolen gown, with dainty white ruffles at the neck and wrists, and, with her hair brushed into delicate waves behind her ears, and her face rounded and rosy, she did not look much like the forlorn girl who used to pick ashes and beg from house to house all day long.

Mrs. Percy, who had been upstairs getting ready to go out, returned and stood in the window putting on her gloves, when she noticed that Cathern had put down the pitcher, and was hitching herself nervously, as if she had something to say.

"Well, what is it, little Kathleen?" asked Mrs. Percy.

"It aint nothin' on'y—on'y that ——" faltered Cathern, looking up wistfully.

"Only what?" asked Mrs. Percy.

"On'y that—that other fust mother—*she* took her little girl out along with her,—she did!"

"And you have never been out with me,—is that it?" asked Mrs. Percy; adding: "Well, you are quite strong enough now to take a walk every pleasant day, and you may come, if you like."

Here was a climax of happiness reached. To go out walking with her new mother, and to be seen by the passers-by, in her company and in pretty clothes instead of rags, was a summit of joy beyond which, to Cathern's mind, it was impossible to wish for much.

"Wait till they sees my coat with the torso down behind!" she said, as Mrs. Percy tied her hat; and when she reached the sidewalk, she stopped a minute to look at her feet and say, triumphantly: "I guess they never thought I'd be having boots what button!"

"Whom do you mean, Kathleen?" asked Mrs. Percy.

"I mean them boys that kep' a-knockin' me away from my barr'l's when I got there fust, an' the people that shut the doors. I wisht they'd all see me now, an' see if they'd do it ag'in! I wants 'em to see me an' find out if I wont — there's one of 'em now!" she cried, suddenly; and, before Mrs. Percy could see what the child was about, Cathern had run to the curbstone a little ahead of them, deliberately bounced against a boy who was picking ashes from a barrel, and stood looking at him contemptuously, with her chin in the air.

The boy looked up in wrath, ready to resent the injury, but was taken aback by seeing that it had come from a daintily dressed child, who was already grasping the hand of a fine lady. His expression changed from anger to an indefinable look of sulky submission.

"Why, Kathleen! How could you?" exclaimed Mrs. Percy, in amazement.

"'Cause," said Cathern, scowling at the boy, while she took a few mincing steps before him, and

tried to attract his attention to her dress, "he's got rags an' patches, an' I aint! An' he has to pick ashes an' I don't, an' he would n't dare to touch me, nohow!" And, to express her sentiment comprehensively to the boy, she puckered up her mouth and lifted her chin at him again.

The boy, doubling up his fists, made an angry gesture in the air at her. Quick as a flash, she sprang to the other side of Mrs. Percy, clutched that lady's skirts, and drew them around her for protection. Then, thrusting her head out to peep at the boy, she made another grimace at him, and said, in jeering tones:

"Ya-a-ah! Come along and do it, if ye dare!"

All this happened in just about a minute, and Mrs. Percy had not been able to interfere effectively. Now, however, she caught Cathern by the wrist, drew her to a little distance, and said, firmly:

"Come! This will never do. This boy has done nothing to you, Catherine, and I will not let you be so rude."

Then she turned to the boy, who, after selecting a good-sized bit of coal from his basket, and holding it behind him, ominously, was moving off as if he meant to throw it at Cathern when he got to a suitable distance from them. But his intention altered as Mrs. Percy took her purse from her pocket, and he dropped the coal quietly when she gave him some pennies, saying, with much sweetness:

"I am sorry she treats you so badly, my poor boy. Try to forget her naughty words, and remember that your rags cannot make you a bad boy any more than her clothes can make her a lady."

With a pleasant nod, she took Cathern's hand again, and walked hastily away.

Her first feeling was indignation at Cathern's showing toward another the same resentment and contempt which, from others, had made her own life so miserable. But, after a few moments' consideration, she said to herself:

"Poor child! What can I expect? She has never had any one to teach her, and it is to be my task to try and let the light into her darkened soul."

But their walk that morning was a curious one. After they had gone a few blocks farther on their way, Cathern again let go of Mrs. Percy's hand, darted across the street, paraded hastily, in two or three paces backward and forward, before a beggar-girl who was sitting upon a door-step, and was back again in an instant, meeting Mrs. Percy and taking her hand as before.

"Ho! ho! ho!" laughed the beggar. "Who cares if I haint?"

"Why, what was that for, Cathern?" asked Mrs. Percy, annoyed.

"I did n't say nothin' much then, at all," answered Cathern. "I on'y showed her me hat an' coat, an' shook the torso at her, an' stuck out me boots to her, an' said *she* had n't got 'em! An' neither she aint."

"Oh, little girl! little girl! How shall I ever teach you all you have got to learn?" exclaimed Mrs. Percy, half to herself and half to Cathern.

They walked on in silence, Mrs. Percy wondering by what means she would be best able to reach this poor little ignorant mind, while its possessor went skipping along at her side, singing gayly to herself.

Presently a handsomely dressed lady met, and was in the act of passing them, when Cathern suddenly stood quite still, planting herself, stiff and rigid, directly in the way. The lady was obliged not only to move to one side, but also to brush close against Cathern in order to get by, and she looked down frowningly upon the irritating child. Mrs. Percy turned to speak, and saw Cathern, with a low, merry laugh, looking back over her shoulder at the lady, in great glee.

"Why are you so glad to make that lady see how rude you can be?" asked Mrs. Percy, in a discouraged tone.

"Ha! ha! ha!" laughed Cathern, more merrily than ever. "Did n't you see how she had to turn out for me? She was n't afeard to touch me then. Her gownd went all over me face, an' she did n't wipe the place where it touched her, neither! That's the way the ladies used to do, though; and the gentlemen used to put out their canes to keep me from comin' nigh to 'em, 'cause they thought some o' me rags might fly off an' stick to 'em. But I'm just as good as they is now. Oh yes, I be! Oh yes, I be!" she went on singing.

"I don't know about that," answered Mrs. Percy, doubtfully. "Come home and let me begin the task that is before me of showing you how you may become so."

And she drew the child's hand into hers, and hurried along, impatient to put an end to the annoyance of such a walk.

But one more incident occurred before they reached home, which helped much to make Mrs. Percy's task a simpler one than it then promised to be. As they reached the corner which was within a few rods of Mrs. Percy's house, they encountered a little child, scarcely more than a baby, trying, with a mighty effort, to climb from the gutter to the sidewalk. Mrs. Percy, on her guard this time, kept a firm hold on Cathern's hand, and attempted to draw her hastily over the curbstone to a safe distance before helping the little one

upon its feet. But Cathern resisted the action, and again too quick for Mrs. Percy, saying "Git out o' me way!" stuck out her foot and gave the baby a push which sent it rolling backward into the gutter. Its head struck against the stones, and it lay there unconscious. Mrs. Percy stooped instantly and raised the little one in her arms. There was the usual confusion which follows such an accident. Those who happened to be passing stopped to look, and, apparently, would have been contented simply to gaze upon the tiny white face indifferently; and there was a momentary dispute between a huxter-woman and a vender of boot-lacings for the best view of the little drooping limbs. To Mrs. Percy's question, "Where does the child live? Who is her mother?" there was a chorus in answer of, "She aint got no mother," and shouts of "Mr. Daffle! Mr. Daffle!" from various small boys who had gathered around Mrs. Percy, with a determination to see "the whole thing through." A very shabby old man, wiping his mouth on his coat-cuff, came limping out of a grocery-store, and the crowd made way for him.

"Oh, my! Oh, my! Oh, Trudy! Is she dead? Is she killed?" he cried, bewildered.

"No, no," Mrs. Percy answered. "She is stunned. It was an accident. Come quickly to my house,—it is close by."

And, without losing more minutes, which seemed than long ones, she carried the baby hastily to her own door.

Cathern was there before her, ringing the bell violently; and, by the time Mrs. Percy reached her, the door was open, the housemaid, aghast, asking questions as fast as she could talk, and the small boys, who had every one resolutely followed Cathern, were all answering and pointing at once.

During the next few minutes, Cathern, with a face as white as the injured child's, watched every look and motion of Mrs. Percy's. Her eager hands were the first to bring water when it was called for; and, without a word, she answered every demand for assistance to the best of her small power. In a few moments, amid the wails of the old man, the child opened her eyes, and, as Mrs. Percy bathed her face and put some reviving drops into her mouth, began to move naturally with recovered consciousness. Cathern bounded with delight. The old man held out his hands to "Trudy," as he called the little one, and expressed his joy by cuddling her in his arms and trotting around the room with her.

After a little while, Mrs. Percy drew from him the few leading facts concerning the child's history,—the death of her parents, her dependence upon him as her grandfather, how he supported

her by running on occasional errands for two or three grocery stores in the neighborhood.

"I goes first to one an' then to t' other to git a job," he said; "for it's only leaving things to places that I'm good for, bein' so old, ye see, ma'am, and," touching his forehead significantly, "my mem'ry bein' near gone,—why, I aint no 'count for messages. Whiles I'm off, the children round about looks arter Trudy; but when anything like a target company or a hand-organ with a monkey comes along, she's mostly forgot."

an'—an'— Mother! mother! I feels bad! I feels bad!" she cried, quite overcome, throwing herself into Mrs. Percy's arms and sobbing.

It was too much for her,—the sudden change from delight in her possessions and general self-satisfaction, to acute pain at the realization that here was another child, so much weaker and smaller than herself, who was as desolate as she had been, and whom she had treated with the same thoughtless cruelty which she had herself experienced. To see this and feel it for herself, did more than all



LITTLE TRUDY MAKES HER FIRST APPEARANCE.

Cathern, who had listened attentively to every word, planted herself in front of the old man, and said: "Look a' here!"

He looked, but Mrs. Percy could see more than he did in the changed expression and earnestness of Cathern's manner.

"I'll mind her an' look out for her when you're off, if ye'll let me," she said, earnestly. "I did n't have no mother, neither; but I've got one now, an' she'll let me, if I ax her. She's my mother," pointing to Mrs. Percy; "an' I aint 'Cathern' any more, but I'm 'Kathleen,' an' she gives me everything nice. I'll look out for Trudy, an' I wont never let her get hurt, an' I'll give her nice things, too. She can have the tarsle off my coat,

Mrs. Percy's gentle teaching could do. In the evening, after Mr. Daffle had come again and carried his grandchild away, she sat down with her and talked with her long and patiently about the possibility of there being a life for her in the future more beautiful than even her old visions had been in the dingy court.

This was really the beginning of Kathleen's new life. Until then, she had been happy in taking the comfort and fresh delight of every day; but now her heart went out to Trudy, and, although too young to be fully conscious of what was revealed to her, she caught a glimpse of what joy it might bring to her to live and do for another than herself.

Mrs. Percy had given Mr. Daffle permission, in answer to Kathleen's entreaties, to leave the little Trudy with them every morning, calling for her every evening when his day's duties should be ended. She had not much confidence in the working of Kathleen's plan, and was also half inclined to suspect that the old man, satisfied with the present of money which she had given him, would not bring Trudy again. But the next morning, while they were at breakfast, the door-bell rang, and great was Kathleen's joy at seeing Trudy's little shaggy head and grimy figure, in a ragged and dust-colored gown made after the most primitive pattern, ushered into the room by the astonished maid.

Kathleen was so full of the idea of beginning at once to take active care of the little one, that she was rather impatient during breakfast. It was disappointing that Trudy could not eat more,—Kathleen had piled upon her plate rather more than one would offer to a hard-working laborer,—and that she was rather inclined, in her bewildered gazing at everything and everybody, to forget her breakfast altogether. Presently, however, when Mrs. Percy sent them both to the nursery while some household matters were occupying her downstairs, Cathern thought that her opportunity had come, and, pouncing upon Trudy, exclaimed:

"The fust thing is to get washed!"

Great was Mrs. Percy's astonishment when, soon afterward, she opened the bath-room door and beheld Kathleen, her sleeves rolled up and a towel pinned around her, scrubbing away at Trudy, who looked just then in some danger of being drowned in soap-suds, but who seemed also to be in a state of too much wonder at the novelty of the situation to object to it.

Perceiving that Kathleen was really intent upon caring for the child, Mrs. Percy did not interfere, excepting where it was necessary, and avoided, heroically, laughing at the various dilemmas which occurred in the process of purifying Trudy's very diminutive person. She even had flannels ready in which to wrap the shivering little form, when Kathleen, despising, of course, Trudy's old garments, suddenly cried:

"Oh! I forgot about clo'es! She aint got nothin' to put on her, mother!"

If Trudy could only have written the history of that day, from her point of view, her story would have been vastly entertaining. How she was scrubbed, and combed, rocked and trotted until her brain must have felt like a mold of jelly! How she was caught round the body, carried and dumped, first in one place and then in another! How Kathleen pinned and tied upon her all sorts of her own garments until she was half suffocated;

and, finally, how she was penned into a corner by a barricade of chairs while Kathleen undertook to scrub in the wash-basin the heap of rags she had arrived in! But at the close of day there was a pretty story which anybody there might have told when Mrs. Percy appeared, holding up before the happy children the neat little garments which she had made on her sewing-machine.

"Well, well! an' it's a queer wurreld!" said Susan, the housemaid, to the cook. "Not sence the firrst day whin the p'or little Mabel was took down, I have n't sane the mistress look the likes o' that! There she was a-laughin', with her cheeks like the June roses, an' the gay sound in her voice a-callin' the childers! An' there was the owld man coom aferher his yoong un, a-worrikin' his hands oop an' down with amazement! An' there was this yoong fancy o' Miss Parcy's, holdin' onto the table an' swingin' her legs in under it with j'y,—an' all the while there was the chidt herself that they were all gittin' excited over,—there she was, with nothing onto her save K'tleen's long flannel ni'-gownd swaping the floor, shtarin' firrst at the one an' thin at the tother of 'em with stupefaction!"

When, afterward, Mrs. Percy went to see Kathleen tucked up in her little bed, she was surprised to see her face screwed up into many wrinkles, and tears making their way down her cheeks.

"What is it?" asked Mrs. Percy, gently. "You have worked too hard over your little charge, and I fancy you are tired,—is that so?"

"Oh, I don't care for that!" sobbed Kathleen. "But I wisht—I wisht I had n't shoved that boy! May be—oh! oh!—may be he had n't no mother neither! Nor that girl on the step! Oh! an' I was thinkin' on'y about me clo'es an'—an'—the t-t-tor-torsle on me coat, an' I never thunk about the mothers,—not wunst I did n't!"

"But you have learned a great deal about the mothers to-day, darling," said Mrs. Percy, soothing her, "and I do not believe you will forget them so any more. Be as much like a mother as you can to this poor little Trudy,—just as I try to be a mother to you,—and you will learn more in that way than I could ever teach you. To be to some one else what you want me to be to you, will make you gladder than anything else in the world can."

The light was coming fast now into Kathleen's shadowy understanding. After Mrs. Percy had gone, she sat up in bed and repeated, in a whisper: "Just as I try to be a mother to ye! As I try! What ye want me to be to ye!"

Then for a few minutes she was so busy thinking that she did move even a finger, and almost held her breath. After a while she said, very softly:

"I never thunk before! I thunk on'y she was goin' to be my *reel* mother forever and ever! An' I don't know even who my own *reel* mother was, on'y that she was like Biddy Dolan. An' this mother is the *reel* mother on'y of her—Mabel! An' Mabel was good, an' I was n't,—I was bad. I was n't never good in my whole life, not till this mother showed me how; an' then I was on'y good a little."

Kathleen sat quite still, thinking very hard again, for a few minutes. Then she heaved a sigh, and said: "An' there's Trudy!"

Another pause.

"She aint got nobody on'y just a grandfather, an' he's so old,—his face is all rumpled up!"

Another longer pause, and then, with another sigh,—a happier one this time,—she said:

"I must be like a little mother to Trudy, my mother says. So I will,—I will,—I will,—I will!"

In the morning, Mrs. Percy noticed a change in Kathleen. She was more quiet than usual, and there was a thoughtfulness in her face which gave it rather an old look, and was rather painful to see, as if it were a shadow of her old dreariness. The smile which was always so bright and sunny came back as Mrs. Percy kissed and pinched her cheeks playfully, and, nestling against her loving bosom, Kathleen forgot the shadows for a time. They came again, and the little face looked older than ever when Mr. Daffle brought Trudy. Mrs. Percy went into the parlor to write a note which she was going to ask the old man to post for her, and accidentally left a little ajar the door which opened directly into the dining-room, where he was waiting with the children, so that she could hear distinctly every word of the singular conversation which followed.

"My mother made Trudy that gownd," said Kathleen; "but I'm going to learn to make all the rest of her clo'es,—every one of 'em!"

"You're pretty small for that, missy. It'll be harder than ye think," said the old man.

"No matter!" said Kathleen. "I can do it if I works hard."

"Taint no use, missy, to trouble yerself,—Trudy's too little. She wont care for 'em, an' she can get along without much of anything," said Mr. Daffle.

"No, she can't," said Kathleen, decidedly; "an' I'm goin' to make her everything she wants, 'cause she aint got no mother, an' by an' by that'll make her feel bad, when she gets as big as me. So I'm goin' to play I'm her mother, an' see to her, just as this here mother"—motioning toward the parlor—"plays she's mine."

"If she aint your mother, what is she? and where's yer own?" asked Mr. Daffle.

"She's dead, o' course," answered Kathleen, cheerfully. "But she was n't this kind of a mother, no how, I guess,—she was like Biddy Dolan, an' I did n't like Biddy. Oh!" she said, confidentially, drawing nearer to Mr. Daffle,—oh! I wanted a mother orfe! So I hunted for one. But I had to hunt a long time, 'cause they was n't any on'y just this one, an' I foun' her, an' she took me for her child, 'cause hers was dead, just like my mother. So I foun' her an' she foun' me,—don't ye see? An' then I was sick."

"What made ye sick?" Mr. Daffle asked.

"Oh, gettin' tired goin' after my mother an' never findin' her, an' always bein' hungry, an' then goin' back to the shanty. Did you ever live in a shanty?"

"No,—I live in a tinament," answered Mr. Daffle.

"You better be glad it aint a shanty," said Kathleen, shaking her head, knowingly.

"Timaments is jest as bad," said Mr. Daffle.

"Are the people in tinaments ever as hungry as the people in shanties?" asked Kathleen.

"Law, yes!" exclaimed Mr. Daffle. "The top floors is mostly hungry."

"Was you ever?" asked Kathleen.

"Hundreds o' times," said the old man.

"Don't it feel orfe?" said Kathleen, drawing nearer still, and rubbing her hand significantly over her pinafore, she added, mysteriously: "Don't ye know,—when ye feels as if it was all holes inside?"

"Yes!" said the old man, "an' ye gets weak all over! An' then gripes!"

"Yes!" pursued Kathleen, putting her hand to her throat; "an' ye feels a lump come right here, an' yer head goes spinnin' roun' an' roun'! But—" here her tones brightened: "Trudy sha'n't feel that ways, 'cause she'll always have me now. An' if my mother don't want her to eat things here any time, I can go beggin' ag'in for her!"

Mrs. Percy, loath to hear any more of the conversation, came in now, hastily dispatched Mr. Daffle with her note, and took the children upstairs.

From that time, Kathleen was quite serious in her anxiety to adopt Trudy as her own especial charge,—to nurse her, play with her, and "mind" her as well as she possibly could,—and Mrs. Percy wisely decided to encourage the child's fancy.

Mr. Daffle continued to bring the little one every morning and call for her every evening, and, excepting for an hour or two daily, when Kathleen had lessons to occupy her with Mrs. Percy, she spent nearly all her time in amusing Trudy, attending, as far as her small might was able, to the

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child's wants, or, with Mrs. Percy's help, trying to sew for her.

It was not long before Trudy learned to trot after her wherever she went, to go to her in trouble, and to begin in earnest to return the affection which had so suddenly come into her little life. The first thing, every day, as soon as Mr. Dafle set her down in the dining-room, she would look all about her for Kathleen. Sometimes Kathleen would hide, and then Trudy would run about in great excitement, peeping into every corner, until, spying her friend, she would run into her arms with a cry of joy that defied the mighty efforts of the canary-bird to drown it.

So weeks flew by until summer-time came, and Mrs. Percy was preparing to go to her cottage in the country. The kind lady had not cared for the motherless little ones in vain. It was no new thing now for Susan to discover the "June roses" on her mistress's fair cheeks, or sunny smiles about her mouth. When she looked now at the beautiful portrait in her bedroom, and her heart yearned for her dear ones, the thought of these desolate children dependent upon her would comfort her, and, still looking at the picture through her tears, she would say, softly:

"I had too much love for you to bless me alone, —it runs over to bless these little helpless ones too!"

Kathleen had listened so often to Mrs. Percy's descriptions of her country home, and had asked so many questions about it, that she had grown quite familiar in thought with the cottage and its surroundings.

A few evenings before they went to it, just after Trudy had been taken home, she crept up to Mrs. Percy, who was sitting alone in the twilight, with one more question which had been on her lips constantly of late, but which she had not yet had the courage to ask.

"Mother," she whispered, "did ye say they was a chicken-house to the country?"

"Yes," answered Mrs. Percy,—"a nice one, as big as my store-closet."

"And chickens?"

"Yes, plenty of chickens."

"Don't you think, mother,—say, don't you think ——" Kathleen halted.

"Well? Don't I think what? Out with it bravely, my little girl," said Mrs. Percy, who had guessed what was in Kathleen's mind.

"Why!" said Kathleen, "don't you think we could clear out the chickens an' give 'em another place, an' I'd scrub the chickens' house; an' could n't we fix a little bed into it, an'—an'—keep Trudy there nights?"

Mrs. Percy laughed as she drew Kathleen closer

to her, and answered, playfully clapping the child's hands together:

"Why, how funny! I thought of Trudy too, but I never thought of the hen-house! If I had, I might have sent a bed for it; but, as I did n't, I bought a little crib and sent it to be put into *your* room, right next to mine. What do you think of that?"

Such a shout of joy as Kathleen gave! She had to jump and dance all around the room before she nestled up to Mrs. Percy again, and cried:

"Oh, you are the best mother in all the world! I wish—I wish *all* the little childers that have n't got any mothers could find you, my own mother! I knows you aint my reel mother, but if I get gooder and gooder, you'll get reeler and reeler,—wont you, mother?"

"Stay close to me, poor little mother-hungry child!" said Mrs. Percy, "and I will tell thee where thou canst find some one better than I am for thy true parent!"

And, with the child's head on her bosom, she told her beautiful true stories about the real Father whom there was for her and all of us, and who would watch over her and help her to be good and useful.

Into the happy country they all went, and the rooms where the darling Mabel used to play, the garden, grassy lawns and woods she had made bright with her young life, were less lonely now to the mother, because of the merry song and laughter of two children who had never seen such a Paradise before.

Summer went, and they gathered many of the gay autumn leaves before they went back to the city home.

Trudy did not go to live with her poor old grandfather again. He was easily persuaded to go himself to a quiet place out of town where there was a good home for such as he, and to leave Trudy altogether with Mrs. Percy.

Kathleen began to go to school the next winter, and became a devoted little scholar.

There is very little more to tell about her. She did not grow all at once into one of the good, wise little girls one reads about sometimes. Mrs. Percy had to teach her a great many things which were difficult for a little girl whose beginning in life had been in such a bad place, but Kathleen could be as earnest in seeking after other beautiful things as she had been in seeking after a mother, and, as she grew older, it was her delight to gather about herself other poor little people beside Trudy, to study their needs, and try to show them how to live good, happy lives.

For stronger and stronger grew a purpose in her young heart,—a purpose which she revealed to

Mrs. Percy on one of those evenings when it came to be their habit to sit and talk together in the twilight, long after little Trudy was fast asleep.

"Mother," said Kathleen, "you opened your arms to me that night, long ago, and took me just as I was,—all sick at heart and tired,—tired nearly to death,—and you showed me so much love that

it has been growing and growing in me ever since. And now I feel as if I wanted to seek out all the children who want me as much as I wanted you, and open *my* arms to *them*. You have taught me how, and now I want to work, and work, and try with all my might to be like a mother to as many little children as I can."

A LETTER TO LETTER-WRITERS.

BY SUSAN A. BROWN.



HOW many of the readers of ST. NICHOLAS like to write letters? It is certain that some of them do, or Jack-in-the-Pulpit would not receive so many from young subscribers. But I am quite sure that some of them have been heard to say, "Oh, I hate to write letters!" and it is to such as these that I would speak.

As we may safely take it for granted, from the alacrity with which the postman is met at the door, that every one likes to receive letters, it seems to be worth while that boys and girls should learn how to write, with ease and pleasure to themselves, those letters which their friends shall find it a pleasure to read.

Letter-writing is very much a matter of habit, and for that reason it is important that young people should learn early to consider it a pleasant way of communicating thoughts and feelings to their friends, instead of a burdensome task to be got over as quickly as possible.

We often hear people excuse themselves by saying that they have no "gift for writing letters," as though it were something like an ear for music, only accorded to a favored few. But the truth is that any one can write interesting and pleasant letters who will take a little trouble and really persevere in the effort. The grand difficulty in the way is that they are too selfish and too indolent to try. Nothing that is worth anything comes without effort, and if you do not care enough about gratifying your friends to take a little pains for it, you deserve never to receive any letters yourselves.

A few simple rules, carefully observed, will help you over some of the things which you call diffi-

culties. In the first place, *always write distinctly*. It destroys much of the pleasure in receiving a letter if it cannot be read without puzzling out every word. Many an epistle, written on heavy cream-laid paper, with a monogram at the top, is only an annoyance to the one to whom it is addressed, on account of pale ink and careless handwriting.

Be particular in the matter of dating, giving every item distinctly, and sign the letter with your full name. If this habit is formed, you will not run the risk of losing valuable letters, which cannot be forwarded from the Dead-Letter Office, unless accompanied with the full address.

You will find it more easy to reply to a letter soon after you get it than if you neglect it for a few weeks, because you will have the impressions which the first reading made upon you. Tell your friend when you received the letter which you are answering, and take up the topics in the order in which they naturally come, remembering to answer all the questions which have been asked. Try to think what your friend would like best to hear about, and when you undertake to tell anything, do not leave it half told, but finish the story. People who are not careful about this, often give a false impression without meaning to do so. For instance, one of these careless writers, in giving an account of a fire, simply stated that the house was burned, without giving any qualifications, thus giving the impression that it was entirely consumed, thereby causing a whole family much unnecessary trouble and anxiety, as the actual burning in question was very slight.

Do not consider anything too trivial to write about, which you would think worth mentioning in conversation. Writing letters is simply talking upon paper, and your friends will be much more

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entertained by the narration of little every-day affairs, than by profound observations upon topics which you care nothing about.

In writing to very intimate friends, who will be interested in the details of your daily life, it is well sometimes to make your letter a sort of diary—telling something of how you have spent each day since you wrote last; what books you have been reading, what letters you have received from mutual friends, and what you have heard or seen which has interested you.

Write all that you have to say on one subject at once. That is, do not begin to tell about your garden, and then about your school, and then about your garden again; but finish one subject before you begin another. Do not be afraid of using the pronoun *I*. Some people avoid it, and thus give their sentences a shabby and unfinished sound, as, "Went to Boston—called on Mrs. Smith." Never apologize for what you write, by saying that you do not like to write letters. You would not think it quite polite, in visiting a friend, to say, "I do not like to talk to you, so I shall not say much." Keep the idea before you that you are writing for the sake of giving pleasure to your friend.

When your letter is merely an inquiry, or on a matter of business, the case is different. You then should try to be as brief, concise, and clear as possible. An elaborately drawn out business letter is as out of place as it is inconsiderate.

"Do not think what to write, but write what you think," is an old rule, and a good one to remember. If you are away from home, it is very selfish not to share your good times with the family by writing frequent letters. You can tell what you are enjoying so much better while it is fresh in your mind, than you can after you return, when you may not have leisure to go over the whole ground; and these home letters may be a means afterward of refreshing your own memory, and reminding you of incidents which you would otherwise have forgotten. There are many other things which might be said here, but this will do for the present. A very good rule for letter-writing is the golden one, "Do as you would be done by."

Here are two letters, both written not long ago, which illustrate so well some of the things which I have been saying, that I must give them to you. They remind one of the old story of "Eyes and No Eyes," where one boy saw nothing interesting in a long walk, while his brother, in going over the same ground, saw a great many

wonderful things. Fanny wrote with a real desire to give her cousin pleasure, but Ellen wished only to get a disagreeable duty off her mind.

Here is Fanny's letter:

Ingleside, Mass., April 20th, 1876.

MY DEAR ANNIE: I was very glad to receive your kind letter, which came last Thursday.

We are very busy just now, as we go to school every day. Aunt Alice is visiting us, and every evening she gives us a short lesson in drawing. We have taken only six, and so have not got on much; but I hope soon to be able to draw from copies pretty well. After that, we are going to take lessons of a regular teacher in sketching from nature. After we are through with Aunt Alice, mamma reads aloud to us while we rest our eyes. She has just finished the second volume of "Mr. Rutherford's Children," and I think it is the nicest book I ever read, except "Little Women."

Last week mamma took us both to see Mr. Starr exhibit his magic-lantern in the Town Hall. He had a large white screen put up at the back of the stage, and the hall was darkened so that we could see the reflections on the screen. He showed us the sting of a bee and the point of a cambric-needle, very much larger than they really are. The needle looked like a blunt stick, but the sting was as sharp as ever. He had a little animal which he called a water-tiger. It is really so small that you can hardly see it; but on the screen it looked as large as a kitten, and we could see it eat bits of food which he threw into the water. I cannot remember all the things he showed us; but after that part of the exhibition was over, he pretended to talk to a man in the cellar, and he made his voice sound as if another man was answering him. Then he made believe saw a log of wood and catch a bumble-bee. We never heard a ventriloquist before, and of course enjoyed it very much. You asked me what color would be prettiest for your room-paper. I should think you would like blue best. Next week we are invited to Maggie Alison's party. Every one of the girls must either learn some little piece of poetry or a funny story, to repeat there. After supper, Mrs. Alison is going to show us a set of photographs which have been sent from Europe. Ellen and I are working a set of bureau-mats to give Maggie.

I wish you could see our new kittens that are playing on the rug. Mine is gray and Ellen's is buff. You know our kitty ran away, and we both felt so badly that our neighbor, Mrs. Williams, sent us these two last Saturday. I wish you would tell us what to call them. We cannot think of any names pretty enough. Next week the garden will be made, and we are going to try and keep our flower-beds in better order than we did last year.

I had a letter last week from Cousin John. His letter sounds as if he was as old as papa. He is going to Phillips's Academy next September. All the family are sitting here, and send their love. Aunt Alice says she shall not make her visit at your house until June. Give my love to aunt and uncle. Thank them for asking me to go and see you this summer.

Your affectionate cousin,
FANNIE A. HOLMES.

Ellen's letter:

Ingleside, April.

DEAR AGNES: We are very busy, so I cannot write much. We take lessons from Aunt Alice. We go to school all day. I study arithmetic and geography and other things.

We went to an exhibition, and had a splendid time. The man sawed, and caught a bee. The weather is quite warm now. Warm weather is better than cold for a great many things. We don't have any vacation until June. Sixteen girls are in our class. The man's name was Starr. He had a water-tiger that he fed. Aunt Alice sends her love. I am working a mat. We are going to have a bed in the garden. Mamma sends love to you all. I do not like to write letters, so you must excuse a short one. We are going to plant a great many seeds. We are invited to a party. Mamma and papa are very well; so are Fanny and I. We have two kittens. I cannot think of anything more to say. I hope you will write me a long letter very soon. I like to get letters often.

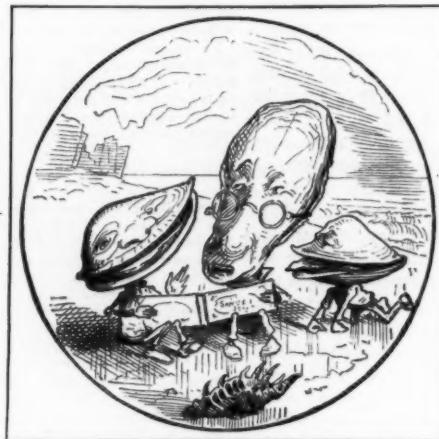
Your affectionate friend,
ELLEN.

THE SEVEN AGES.

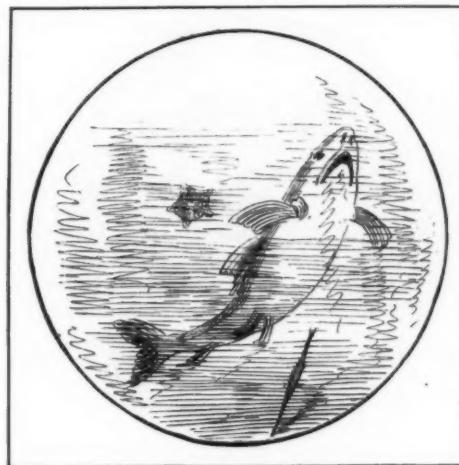
BY M. B. WHITING.



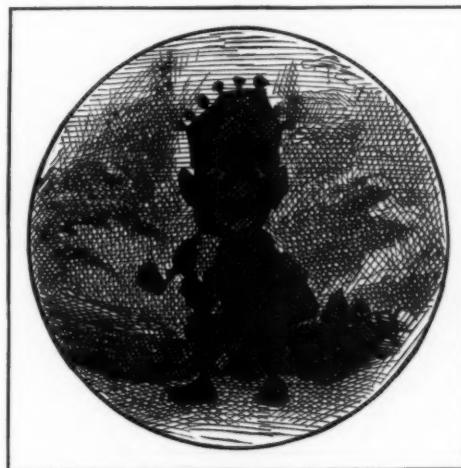
First Age. { IT was an age of Fire,
Long, long years ago,
When great melted rocks,
With earthquake shocks,
In torrents of flame did flow.



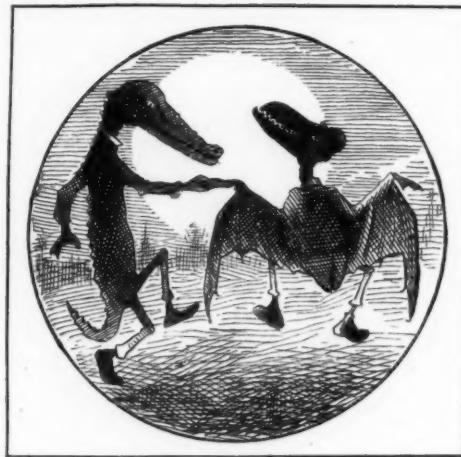
Second Age. { It was an age of Mollusks,
Long, long years ago,
When the clam and the oyster,
With the mussel much moister,
By the sad sea waves sang low.



Third Age. { It was an age of Fishes,
 Long, long years ago,
 When the shark and the gar-fish,
 With the dear little star-fish,
 Swam about stately and slow.

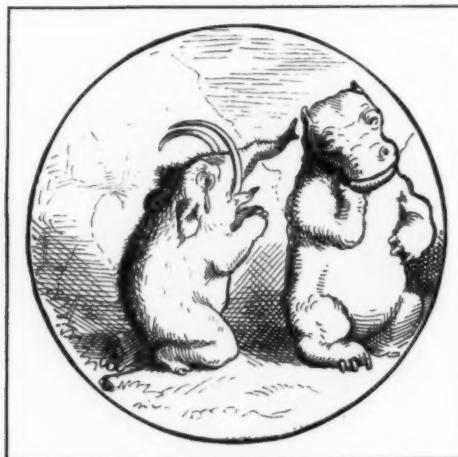


Fourth Age. { It was an age of Carbons,
 Long, long years ago,
 When the fern and the pine,
 And other plants fine,
 Were made into coal, you know.



Fifth Age.

It was an age of Reptiles,
 Long, long years ago,
 When the ichthyosaurus,
 By the banks of the Taurus,
 And the pterodactyl,
 By the gurgling rill,
 Danced in the moonbeam's glow.



Sixth Age.

It was an age of Mammals,
 Long, long years ago,
 When the wild mastodon,
 With his war-paint on,
 The behemoth wooed,
 And the mammoth sued,
 Where glaciers once did go.

Seventh
Age.

It is the age of Man !
 Now tell me, if you can,
 Why no more on the hills
 March the pterodactyls ?
 Why the ancient tapirs,
 Through the morning vapors,
 Chase not the whale,
 Or the sportive snail ?

And when men have gone,
 What next will come on
 This peculiar earth,
 Which had its birth,
 As you surely know,
 In an age of fire,
 Long years ago—
 Yes, long ago ?

ON THE ICE.

BY IRWIN RUSSELL.

"They sweep
 On sounding skates, a thousand different ways,
 In circling poise, swift as the winds along."—THOMSON.

FEW persons, however sedate, can look upon a good smooth sheet of ice without feeling a desire to go and slide upon it. Even Mr. Pickwick was attacked by this temptation, and he—fell. Indeed, so strong within us is the propensity to slide, that we have cultivated it, and refined upon it, and made an art of it,—with rules, theories, and scientific apparatus. Of the latter, the best, the oldest, and the most universal is the skate.

It can only be conjectured when skating was first practiced; but it was certainly very long ago. In that ancient collection of Scandinavian songs and legends known as the "Edda," Uller, the handsome god, is described as being the possessor of a pair of skates.* This proves that skating is at

least a thousand years old. It is supposed to have been introduced into England about the twelfth century, and into the central parts of Europe somewhat earlier. It is curious, that although all northern nations possessed the sledge, those of America knew nothing of the skate, while the people of Europe did not have the snow-shoe. The course of invention varied, according to requirements. In America, in high latitudes, the snows are heavy, and open ice is comparatively rare. In the corresponding parts of Europe, there is much more clear ice, and proportionately less snow.

The ancient skates were nothing but the shin-bones of oxen or other large animals, pierced with holes to receive the cords or thongs which bound them to the feet. Fitzstephen's "History of London," written in the thirteenth century, is the earliest

English book in which skating is spoken of; and we learn, from its description, that the performers upon these bone skates kept themselves in motion by striking against the ice with an iron-shod pole. Sometimes specimens of these bone skates have been discovered, in the progress of excavations, in several European countries; and a very well preserved pair, so found in England some years ago, can now be seen in the British Museum.

It is unknown when or where iron was first employed in the construction of skates. It was probably in Holland; for skates, of a pattern very much like that of the ones we have now, not only were known in that country, but were extensively used by all classes of its people, long before the pastime of skating became general elsewhere. Skating is something more than a pastime in Holland. There it is one of the useful arts, and is universally practiced and highly esteemed. It offers a very convenient mode of travel in winter over the canals that almost entirely supply the place of roads in the Land of Dykes; and people skate from farm to farm, and from town to town, and to church, and to market, often carrying heavy burdens. The Russians have constructed an ice-locomotive, with roughened driving-wheels to lay hold of the slippery surface, and it has proved a success; but in Holland, every man is his own ice-locomotive. And so is every woman hers,—for it has long been customary for ladies to skate in Holland; whereas in other countries, until recently, this most excellent of out-door exercises for them has been almost tabooed.

The first skaters in our part of the world were the honest Dutchmen of the "Province of Nieuw Nederlands," who doubtless brought their skates with them in that celebrated vessel, the "Goede Vrouw,"—which, we are told by the learned Diedrich Knickerbocker, "had one hundred feet in the beam, one hundred feet in the keel, and one hundred feet from the bottom of the stern-post to the taffarel." The Dutch certainly deserve high honor for having introduced skating and Christmas presents into America, if for nothing else. As they did so, the worthy St. Nicholas must be esteemed the patron of all American skaters.

The modern skate has within the past few years undergone many modifications, some of which are great improvements. The skate of twenty years ago was fastened to the foot with a single long strap, which passed through rings, crossed and recrossed, and was finally clasped in a common tongue buckle. The runner was always "square" at the heel, and extended up over the foot at the toe in a great useless curl. A spike entered the heel of the shoe, and the blade was fluted or "guttered" on the bottom. This latter feature,

although it is a great fault, is still occasionally retained.

The old style of skate has been superseded by better ones; and these are so many, and so different from each other, that it is useless to attempt an enumeration of them. It may be said, briefly, that the best skates are those without straps, and with solid, broad blades, curving up behind as well as before, and lowest in the center. They should be constructed so as to bring the foot as close to the ice as possible, and thus avoid a great leverage upon the ankle.

Professors of the fine art of skating recognize about twenty-five regular "steps" and "evolutions." All of these, however, may be ranged into two classes: the skating of the "inside edge," and that of the "outside edge;" so called from the relative positions of the blade to the ice when performing them. Outside-edge skating is the most graceful, and at the same time most difficult, because it requires that the body be thrown outward from the perpendicular,—thus rendering it difficult to preserve the equilibrium. Although skating, as is seen, has its theory, it is purely a matter of practice. No amount of written instruction or advice will make a skater. That happy consummation is only arrived at by going through a thorough course of hard falls, as is shown by statistics. The required number of falls has not yet been exactly computed, but it is well along in the thousands.

On the 29th of December, 1860, the river Witham, in Lincolnshire, England, presented the novel spectacle of a military parade on skates, in which three full companies took part, and proceeded through a long and complicated drill in excellent style; some of the maneuvers being performed with a motion at the rate of fourteen miles an hour. "Frost Fair," with booths for exhibitions, and canvas-covered restaurants, has occasionally been held upon the Thames at London, since 1684,—the date of its first occurrence. Many ordinary popular amusements, particularly games of ball, have been attempted on the ice, with more or less success. And there is one game that is peculiar to the ice, was invented for the ice, and cannot be played anywhere else except on the ice,—curling. It is a Scottish national amusement, and until recently revived in Canada and some communities of our Northern States, seldom has been practiced outside of Scotland. There it is exceedingly popular, and is played by old and young, gentle and simple; and there appears no reason why it should not become equally popular here. We have already adopted one of its technical terms,—the word *rink*. This word, which we apply to the houses or rooms that are now used

in our cities for common or for roller skating, originally meant the area of ice upon which the game of curling is played.

Curling, though not supposed to be so old as skating, has a respectable degree of antiquity. It is known to have been played throughout Scotland for at least two hundred and fifty years. The terms employed in the game, however, are all of Dutch or German extraction; and it is thought possible that the amusement may have existed in the Low Countries, and have been brought into Scotland by the people of Flanders who immigrated during the reign of James I.

If skating has been sung by Goethe and Klopstock, curling has been no less honored. Most of

The game is played with large stones, which are very similar in shape to a flat onion,—that is, they are in the form of spheres that have been so compressed that their breadth is nearly twice their thickness. The "sole" of the stone—its under surface—is polished as smoothly as possible; and a handle, shaped like the letter L turned upon its side, is inserted in the top. Such stones are chosen as are least liable to split, and their weights are graded according to the strength of the players. The ordinary average weight is from thirty to fifty pounds. About fifteen or twenty pounds would be heavy enough for stones to be used by boys.

The *rink* is a smooth place marked off upon the ice, about thirty yards long, and ten feet wide.



AT THE CURLING-RINK.

the Scottish poets have eulogized it, the most eminent men of the nation have praised it and played at it, and even the great Burns speaks of it in his poem "Tam Samson's Elegy":

"When Winter muffles up his cloak,
And binds the mire up like a rock;
When to the lochs the curlers flock
Wi' glesome speed,
Wha will they station at the cock?—
Tam Samson's dead!

"He was the king o' a' the core,
To guard, or draw, or wick a bore;
Or up the rink like Jethu roar
In time o' need;
But now he lays on Death's hog-score,—
Tam Samson's dead!"

At each end of the rink a small mark or hole is chipped out, which is most commonly called the *tee*, although it has other names in some parts of Scotland. Two circles are drawn around each tee, with the latter as their common center. The inner one may be made about four feet in diameter, and the outer one six feet. These circles are called *broughs*, and their object is to assist the eye in judging the distances between the stones, when played, and the tee. Lines are drawn across the rink, in front of the tees, and about fifteen feet from them; which two lines are entitled *hog-scores*. The rink should be perfectly clear of obstructions, as should also the ice beyond the tees.

for several feet. The number of stones is usually sixteen, and eight players upon each side is the common number. There may be any number less than eight, however, if so agreed.

There are thirty-one "points" in the game. All the players stand at one tee, and slide their stones up the rink to the tee at the other end, in succession; and the stone resting nearest the tee counts one, and is called "the winner." If the stone next nearest the tee, and the one next after that, etc., belong to the same party who own the winner, they each count an additional point; otherwise, they are not "scored." When any player fails to propel his stone beyond the hog-score at the opposite end, one is deducted from the score of his party.

On each side, he who plays last is called the *driver*, and he directs and advises the others. The first player is the *lead*. He grasps a stone firmly by the handle, and slides it up the rink at the tee; attempting to place the stone either upon the tee, or a little on the hither side of it. The others follow; attempting to lay their own stones near the tee, or to place them so as to guard the stones of their own party which have been well laid, or to drive away those of their opponents. When all the stones have been played, and the points

counted, the game is resumed by playing back at the first tee; and so on until thirty-one are counted by one side or the other. A *bore* is a stone that lies in the way of a player, between him and the tee. *Wicking* is "caroming" from or glancing off from one stone to another.

Such are the general principles of curling:—a game that affords excellent exercise, is highly amusing, and gives room for the display of much judgment and skill. When clubs are formed, the cost of having the stones prepared is not great for each individual member. There are many cricket-clubs in America, and our English brethren are adopting base-ball. Why should not curling also become an international game?

There is no doubt that the sports of the ice should be cultivated to the fullest extent; for a time is coming, say the wise men, when our whole globe is to be enveloped in a solid casing of ice; and the man of the future (who will probably much resemble the modern Esquimaux) will be obliged to slide, and to skate, and to curl, without cessation, to keep himself warm and comfortable. That "glacial epoch" is some hundreds of centuries off yet, to be sure; but there is nothing like acquiring good habits early. Wherefore the moral hereof is: Go and have your skates sharpened!



A VISIT FROM JACK FROST.

THE TWO WISHES.

(A Fairy Story.)

BY SUSAN COOLIDGE.

PIEROT and Pierotte were a small brother and sister who were always wishing to be something that they were not, or to have something which they had not. They were not unhappy or discontented children,—far from it. Their home, though poor, was comfortable; their parents, though strict, were kind; they were used to both, and desired nothing better. Wishing with them was a habit, an idle game which they were forever playing. It meant little, but it sounded ill; and a stranger listening, would have judged them less well-off and cheerful than they really were.

“I wish I need n’t wake up, but might lie still all day,” was Pierotte’s first thought every morning; while Pierot’s was, “I wish Pierotte was n’t such a sleepy-head, for then we could get out before sunrise, and gather every mushroom in the meadow while the Blaize children are still snoring in their beds.” Then later, at breakfast, Pierotte would say, “I wish I were the Princess, to have coffee and white bread to my *déjeuner*, instead of tiresome porridge. I am tired of porridge. White bread and coffee must be better,—much better!” But all the time she spoke, Pierotte’s spoon, traveling between her bowl and mouth, conveyed the “tiresome” porridge down her throat as rapidly as though it were the finest Mocha; and Pierotte enjoyed it as much, though she fancied that she did not.

“I wish I were the young Comte Jules,” Pierot would next begin in his turn. “No fagots to bind, no cow to fodder, no sheep to tend. Ah! a fine life he leads! Beautiful clothes, nothing to do. Six meals a day, two of them dinners, a horse to ride,—everything! I wish ——”

“And a nice yellow skin and eyes like boiled gooseberries,” chimed in his mother. “Better wish for these, while you are about it. Much you know of noblemen and their ways! Didst ever have an indigestion? Tell me that. When thou hast tried one, wish for it again, if thou canst.”

Then Pierot would laugh sheepishly, shoulder his hatchet, and go off after wood, the inseparable Pierotte trotting by his side. As they went, it would be:

“I wish I were a bird,” or “I wish we could jump like that grasshopper;” or, “Pierotte, I wish our godfather had left us his money. We should be rich then.”

For the children had the same godfather. Pie-

rotte first, and then Pierot having been named after their father’s cousin, a well-to-do peasant, whom it was expected would remember his little relatives in his will. This hope had been disappointed, and the children’s regrets were natural and excusable, since even the wise dame, their mother, did not conceal her opinion of Cousin Pierre’s conduct, which she considered irregular and dishonest. Children soon learn to join in chorus with older voices, and Pierot and Pierotte, in this case, found it particularly easy, as it chimed with the habit of their lives.

One warm July morning, their mother roused them for an early breakfast, and sent them into the forest after wood.

“My last fagot is in,” she said. “You must bind and tie smartly to-day. And, Pierotte, help thy brother all that thou canst, for the father cannot spare him to go again this week, and on Saturday is the sennight’s baking.”

So they set forth. The sun was not fairly risen, but his light went before his coming, and even in the dim forest-paths it was easy to distinguish leaf from flower. Shadows fell across the way from the trees, which stood so motionless that they seemed still asleep. Heavy dew hung on the branches; the air was full of a rare perfume, made up of many different fragrances, mixed and blended by the cunning fingers of the night. A little later, and the light broadened. Rays of sun filtered through the boughs, a wind stirred, and the trees roused themselves, each with a little shake and quiver. Somehow, the forest looked unfamiliar, and like a new place to the children that morning. They were not often there at so early an hour, it is true, but this did not quite account for the strange aspect of the woods. Neither of them knew, or, if they knew, they had forgotten, that it was Midsummer’s Day, the fairies’ special festival. Nothing met their eyes, no whir of wings or sparkle of bright faces from under the fern-branches, but a sense of something unusual was in the air, and the little brother and sister walked along in silence, peering curiously this way and that, with an instinctive expectation of unseen wonders.

“Is n’t it lovely?” whispered Pierotte, at last. “It never looked so pretty here as it does to-day. See that wild-rose,—how many flowers it has! Oh! what was that? It waved at me!”

“What waved?”

"The rose. It waved a white arm at me!"

"Nonsense! It was the wind," replied Pierot, sturdily, leading the way into a side-path which led off from the rose-bush.

"Is it much farther where we get the wood?" asked Pierotte, for the children had been walking a considerable time.

"Father said we were to go to the Hazel Copse," answered Pierot. "We must be almost there."

So for half an hour longer they went on and on, but still no sign of fallen trees or wood-choppers appeared, and Pierot was forced to confess that he must have mistaken the road.

"It is queer, too," he said. "There was that big red toad-stool where the paths joined. I marked it the other day when I came with the father. What's the matter?" for Pierotte had given a sudden jump.

"Some one laughed," said Pierotte, in an awestruck tone.

"It was a cricket or tree-toad. Who is here to laugh?"

Pierotte tried hard to believe him, but she did not feel comfortable, and held Pierot's sleeve tight as they went. He felt the trembling of the little hand.

"Pierotte, thou art a goose!" he said; but all the same he put his arm round her shoulders, which comforted her so that she walked less timidously.

One path after another they tried, but none of them led to the cleared spot where the fallen trees lay. The sun rose high, and the day grew warmer, but in the forest a soft breeze blew, and kept them cool. Hour after hour passed; the children had walked till they were tired. They rested awhile, ate half their dinner of curds and black bread, then they went on again, turned, twisted, tried paths to right and paths to left, but still the dense woods closed them in, and they had no idea where they were, or how they should go.

Suddenly the track they were following led to a little clearing, in which stood a tiny hut, with a fenced garden full of cherry-trees and roses. It was such a surprise to find this fertile and blooming spot in the heart of the wild wood, that the children stood still with their mouths open, to stare at it.

"How strange!" gasped Pierot, when at last he found his voice. "The father always said that ours was the only hut till you got to the other side of the forest."

"Perhaps this *is* the other side," suggested Pierotte.

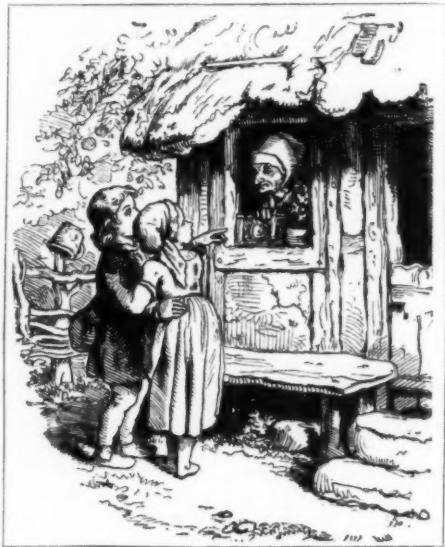
An odd chuckling laugh followed this remark, and they became aware of an old woman sitting at the window of the cottage,—a comical old woman, with a stiff square cap on her head, sharp twinkling

eyes, and a long hooked nose. As the children looked, she laughed again, and, extending her finger, beckoned them to come nearer.

Timidly they obeyed, setting down their big wood-basket at the gate. The old woman leaned over the window to await them, her hand on a square glass jar full of yellow liquid, in which floated what seemed to be a pickled serpent with his tail in three coils, and the tip in his mouth. Pierotte shuddered at the serpent, but Pierot was bolder.

"Did you want us, good madam?" he asked.

"Want you? No," replied the "good madam." "How should I want you? I saw you staring at my house as if your eyes would pop out of your heads, and I thought, perhaps, you wanted me."



"DID YOU WANT US, GOOD MADAM?"

"It was only—we were only—surprised," stammered Pierot. "Because we did n't know that there was a house here."

"There was none last night, and there wont be any to-morrow morning—at least—none for children to stare at," replied the old woman, coolly.

"What *do* you mean?" cried Pierot, astonished beyond measure. "How can a house be built in one night? And why wont it be here to-morrow!"

"Because to-morrow wont be Midsummer's Day—and to-day is," replied the old woman; "and a fairy-house is visible to mortal eyes at that time, and no other."

"Fairy-house!" faltered Pierot; while Pierotte, jumping more rapidly to a conclusion, fairly

screamed: "Oh, Pierot! Madam, then, is a fairy! A real fairy! Pierot, think of it, only think of it!"

"Very much at your service," said the old woman, with a malicious smile. "Do you like fairies, then? Do you admire my pickled snake? Would you wish to pull some flowers?"

Something in the smile made Pierotte draw back; but Pierot said, politely:

"One rose, perhaps—since Madam is so good."

The fairy leaned out and plucked a rose from the vine which grew on the wall close by.

"Now, listen," she said. "Each of my roses incloses a wish. You are great wishers, I know;" and her eyes twinkled queerly. "This time the wish will come true, so take care what you are about. There will be no coming to get me to undo the wish, for I sha'n't be visible again till this time next year on Midsummer's Day,—you know."

"Oh, Pierot! what shall we wish for?" cried Pierotte, much excited; but the old woman only repeated, "Take care!" drew her head in at the window, and all in a minute,—how they could not explain,—the cottage had vanished, the garden, the gate,—they were in the wood again, with nothing but trees and bushes about them; and all would have seemed like a dream, except for the rose which Pierot held in his hand—red and fragrant.

"What shall we wish for?" repeated Pierotte, as they seated themselves under a tree to talk over this marvelous adventure.

"We must be very careful, and ask for something nice," replied Pierot.

"It would be better to wait and think for a long time first," suggested Pierotte.

"Thou art right. We will. Art thou not hungry?"

"Oh, so hungry! Let us eat the rest of our bread now. I can't wait any longer."

So Pierot produced the big lump of bread, and divided it into two equal portions.

"Look, look!" cried Pierotte, as her teeth met in the first mouthful. "A cherry-tree, brother,—a real cherry-tree here in the woods! And with ripe cherries on it! How good some would be with our bread!"

"First rate!" cried Pierot; and, putting their bread carefully on the grass, both ran to the tree. Alas! the boughs grew high, and the cherries hung far beyond their reach. Pierot tried to climb the tree, but the stem was both slight and slippery. Then they found a forked stick, but vainly attempted to hook and draw down a branch.

"Oh, dear! I wish we were both grown up," cried Pierot, panting with exertion.

"So do I. If we were as big as father and mother, we could reach the boughs without even getting on tiptoe," chimed in Pierotte.

Luckless words! As Pierot spoke, the rose, which he had stuck in his cap, shriveled and faded, while a queer sensation as if he were being carried up into the air swept over him. He clutched at something to hold himself down. That something was the cherry-tree bough! He could reach it now, and as his eyes turned with dismay toward Pierotte, there she stood, also holding a twig of the tree, only two or three inches lower than his own. Her pretty round cheeks and childish curls were gone, and instead of them he beheld a middle-aged countenance with dull hair, a red nose, and a mouth fallen in for lack of teeth. She, on her part, unconscious of the change, was staring at him with a horrified expression.

"Why, Pierot!" she cried at last, in a voice which sounded as old as her face. "How queer you look! You've got a beard, and your forehead is all criss-cross and wrinkly, and your chin rough. Dear me, how ugly you are! I never thought you could be so ugly."

"Ugly, eh! Perhaps you would like to see your own face," said Pierot, enraged at this flattering criticism. "Just wait till we get home, and I show you the old looking-glass. But stay, we need n't wait;" and he dragged Pierotte to the side of a little pool of still water, which had caught his eye among the bushes. "Here's a looking-glass ready made," he went on. "Look, Pierotte, and see what a beauty you have become."

Poor Pierotte! She took one look, gave a scream, and covered her face with her hands.

"That me?" she cried. "Oh! I never, never will think it! What is the matter with us, Pierot? Was it that horrid fairy, do you think? Did she bewitch us?"

"The wish!" faltered Pierot, who at that moment caught sight of the faded rose in his cap. "I wished that we were both grown up, don't you remember? Oh, what a fool I was!"

"You horrid boy! You have gone and wished me into an ugly old woman! I'll never forgive you!" sobbed Pierotte.

"It was your wish too. You said you would like to be as old as father and mother. So you need n't call me horrid!" answered Pierot, angrily.

Silence followed, broken only by Pierotte's sobs. The two old children sat with their backs to each other, under different trees. By and by Pierot's heart began to smite him.

"It was more my fault than hers," he thought; and, turning round a little way, he said, coaxingly, "Pierotte."

No answer. Pierotte only stuck out her shoulder a little and remained silent.

"Don't look so cross," went on Pierot. "You

can't think how horrid it makes you—a woman of your age!"

"I'm not a woman of my age. Oh, how can you say such things?" sobbed Pierotte. "I don't want to be grown-up. I want to be a little girl again."

"You used to be always wishing you were big," remarked her now big brother.

"Y—es, so I was; but I never meant all at once. I wanted to be big enough to spin—and the—mother—was—going—to teach me," went on poor Pierotte, crying bitterly, "and I wanted to be as big as Laura Blaize—and—pretty—and some day have a sweetheart, as she had—and—but what's the use—I've lost it all, and I'm grown-up, and old and ugly already, and the mother won't know me, and the father will say, 'My little Pierotte—'Cœur de St. Martin—impossible! get out you witch!'" Overcome by this dreadful picture, Pierotte hid her face and cried louder than ever.

"I'll tell you what," said Pierot, after a pause, "don't let us go home at all. We will just hide here in the woods for a year, and when Midsummer's Day comes round, we'll hunt till we find the fairy house again, and beg her, on our knees, for another wish, and if she says 'yes,' we'll wish at once to be little just as we were this morning, and then we'll go home directly."

"Poor mother; she will think we are dead!" sighed Pierotte.

"That's no worse than if she saw us like this. I'd be conscripted most likely and sent off to fight, and me only twelve years old. And you'd have a horrid time of it with the Blaize boys. Robert Blaize said you were the prettiest girl in Balne aux Bois. I wonder what he'd say now?"

"Oh yes, let us stay here," shuddered Pierotte. "I could n't bear to see the Blaize boys now. But then—it will be dark soon—sha' n't you be frightened to stay in the woods all night?"

"Oh! a man like me is n't easily frightened," said Pierot, stoutly, but his teeth chattered a little.

"It's so queer to hear you call yourself 'a man,'" remarked Pierotte.

"And it's just as queer to hear you call yourself a little girl," answered Pierot, with a glance at the antiquated face beside him.

"Dear, how my legs shake, and how stiff my knees are!" sighed Pierotte. "Do grown-up people feel like that always?"

"I don't know," said Pierot, whose own legs lacked their old springiness. "Would you like some cherries now, Pierotte? I can reach them easily."

"Cherries! Those sour things? No, thank you. They would be sure to disagree with me," returned Pierotte, pettishly.

"Times are changed," muttered Pierot, but he dared not speak aloud.

"Where shall we sleep?" asked Pierotte.

"Under the trees, so long as the summer lasts."

"Gracious! We shall both die of rheumatism."

"Rheumatism? What an idea for a child like you!"

"I wish I *were* a child," said Pierotte, with a groan. "Here's a tree with grass below it, and I'm getting tired and sleepy."

When the brother and sister woke it was broad sunlight again.

"One day gone of our year," said Pierot, trying to be cheerful.

It was hard work as time went on, and with all their constant walking and wandering they never seemed to find their way out of the forest, or of that particular part of it where their luckless adventure had befallen them. Turn which way they would, the paths always appeared to lead them round to the same spot; it was like bewitchment; they could make nothing out of it. The dullness of their lives was varied only by an occasional quarrel. Pierot would essay to climb a tree, and Pierotte, grown sage and proper, would upbraid him for behaving so foolishly—"just like a boy,"—or he would catch her using the pool as a mirror, and would tease her for caring so much for a plain old face when there was nobody but himself to look. How the time went they had no idea. It seemed always daylight, and yet weeks, if not months, must have passed, they thought, and Pierot at last began to suspect the fairy of having changed the regular course of the sun so as to cheat them out of the proper time for finding her at home.

"It's just like her," he said. "She is making the days seem all alike, so that we may not know when Midsummer comes. Pierotte, I'll tell you what, we must be on the lookout, and search for the little house every day, for if we forget just once that will be the very time, depend upon it."

So every day, and all day long, the two old children wandered to and fro in search of the fairy cot. For a long time their quest was in vain, but at last, one bright afternoon, just before sunset, as they were about giving up the hunt for that day, the woods opened in the same sudden way and revealed the garden, the hut, and—yes—at the window the pointed cap, the sharp black eyes; it was the fairy herself, they had found her at last.

For a moment they were too much bewildered to move, then side by side they hurried into the garden without waiting for invitation.

"Well, my old gaffer, what can I do for you, or for you, dame?" asked the fairy, benevolently.

"Oh, please, I am not a dame, he is not a gaffer," cried Pierotte, imploringly. "I am little

Pierotte"—and she bobbed a courtesy. "And this is Pierot, my brother."

"Pierot and Pierotte! Wonderful!" said the fairy. "But, my dear children, what has caused this change in your appearance? You have aged remarkably since I saw you last."

"Indeed, we have," replied Pierot, with a grimace.

"Well, age is a very respectable thing. Some persons are always wishing to be old," remarked the fairy, maliciously. "You find it much pleasanter than being young, I dare say."

"Indeed, we don't," said Pierotte, wiping her eyes on her apron.

"No? Well, that is sad, but I have heard people say the same before you."

"Oh, please, please," cried Pierot and Pierotte, falling on their knees before the window, "please,

There was no deliberation this time as to what the wish should be.

"I wish I was a little boy," shouted Pierot, holding the rose over his head with a sort of ecstasy.

"And I wish I was a little girl, the same little girl exactly that I used to be," chorused Pierotte.

The rose seemed to melt in air, so quickly did it wither and collapse. And the brother and sister embraced and danced with joy, for each in the other's face saw the fulfillment of their double wish.

"Oh, how young you look! Oh, how pretty you are! Oh, what happiness it is not to be old any longer! The dear fairy! The kind fairy!" These were the exclamations which the squirrels and the birds heard for the next ten minutes, and the birds and the squirrels seemed to be amused, for certain queer and unexplained little noises like

laughs sounded from under the leaves and behind the bushes.

"Let us go home at once to mother," cried Pierotte.

There was no difficulty about the paths now. After walking awhile, Pierot began to recognize this turn and that. There was the huntsman's oak and the Dropping Well; and there—yes, he was sure—lay the hazel copse where the father had bidden them go for wood.

"I say," cried Pierotte, with a sudden bright thought, "we will wait and bind one fagot for the mother's oven—the poor mother! Who has fetched her wood all this time, do you suppose?"

Plenty of sticks lay on the ground ready for binding. The wood-choppers had just left off

their work, it would seem. Pierotte's basket was filled, a fagot tied and lifted on to Pierot's shoulders, and through the gathering twilight they hurried homeward. They were out of the wood soon. There was the hut, with a curl of smoke rising from the chimney; there was the mother standing at the door and looking toward the forest. What would she say when she saw them?

What she said astonished them very much.

"How long you have been!" were the words, but the tone was not one of surprise.

"O mother, mother!" cried Pierotte, clinging to her arm, while Pierot said, "We were afraid to come home because we looked so old, and we feared you would not know us, but now we are young again."

"Old! young!" said the mother. "What does the lad mean? One does not age so fast



THEY FIND THE COTTAGE AGAIN.

dear, kind fairy, forgive us. We don't like to be grown-up at all. We want to be little and young again. Please, dear fairy, turn us into children as we were before?"

"What would be the use?" said the old woman. "You'd begin wanting to be somebody else at once if you were turned back to what you were before."

"We won't, indeed we won't," pleaded the children, very humbly.

The fairy leaned out and gathered a rose.

"Very well," she said. "Here's another wish for you. See that it is a wise one this time, for if you fail, it will be of no use to come to me."

With these words, she shut the blinds suddenly, and lo! in one second, house, garden, and all had vanished, and Pierot and Pierotte were in the forest again.

between sunrise and sunset as to be afraid to come home. Are you dreaming, Pierot?"

"But we have been away a year," said Pierot, passing his hand before his eyes as if trying to clear his ideas.

"A year! Prithee! And the sheets which I hung out at noon not fairly dry yet. A year! And the goats thou drovest to pasture before breakfast not in the shed yet! A year! Thou wouldst better not let the father hear thee prate thus! What, crying, Pierotte! Here's a pretty to do because, forsooth, you are come in an hour late!"

An hour late! The children looked at each other in speechless amazement. To this day the

amazement continues. The mother still persists that they were absent but a few hours. Where, then, were the weeks spent in the wood, the gray hair, the wrinkles, the wanderings in search of the old woman and her hut? Was all and each but a bit of enchantment, a trick of the mirth-loving fairies? They could not tell, and neither can I. Fairies are unaccountable folk, and their doings surpass our guessing, who are but mortal, and stupid at that! One thing I know, that the two children since that day have dropped their foolish habit of wishing and are well content to remain little Pierot and Pierotte till the time comes for them to grow older, as it will only too soon.

THE GOLDEN FISH OF OWARI CASTLE.

BY WILLIAM E. GRIFFIS.

Of all the sports at which the boys in Japan amuse themselves, kite-flying seems to afford the most fun and enjoyment. Japanese kites are not plain coffin-shaped bits of tissue-paper, such as American boys fly. They are made of tough paper stretched on light frames of bamboo, and of all shapes,—square, oblong, or oval. They are also made to imitate animals. I have often, in my walks in Japan, seen a whole paper menagerie in the air. There were crying babies, boys with arms spread out, horses, fishes, bats, hawks, crows, monkeys, snakes, dragons, besides ships, carts, and houses. Across and behind the top of the kite, a thin strip of whalebone is stretched, which hums, buzzes, or sings high in air like a hurdy-gurdy or a swarm of beetles. When the boys of a whole city are out in kite-time, there is more music in the air than is delightful. The real hawks and crows, and other birds, give these buzzing counterfeits of themselves a wide berth. In my walks, I often was deceived when looking up, unable to tell at first whether the moving black spot in the air were paper, or a real, living creature, with beak, claws, and feathers.

A kite-shop in Japan is a jolly place to visit. I knew one old fellow, a toy-maker in Fukui, who was always slitting bamboo or whalebone, painting kite-faces, or stretching them on the frames. His sign out in front was—well, what do you think? I am sure you can't guess. It was a cuttle-fish. A real jolly old cuttle, looking just as funny and old,

with its pulpy forehead and one black eye, as much like Mr. Punch, or an old man with a long nose and chin made out of lobster-claws, as such a soft fellow could.

This is the sign for kite-shops all over Japan. The native boys call a kite *tako*, which is the Japanese for cuttle-fish. It is just such a pun as would be played if a kite-maker in our country were to hang out for his sign the fork-tailed bird after which our kites took their name.

On the faces of the square Japanese kites you can see a whole picture-gallery of the national heroes. Brave boys, great men, warriors in helmet and armor, hunters with bows and arrows, and all the famous children and funny folks in the Japanese fairy tales, are painted on them in gay colors, besides leaping dragons, snow-storms, pretty girls dancing, and a great many other designs.

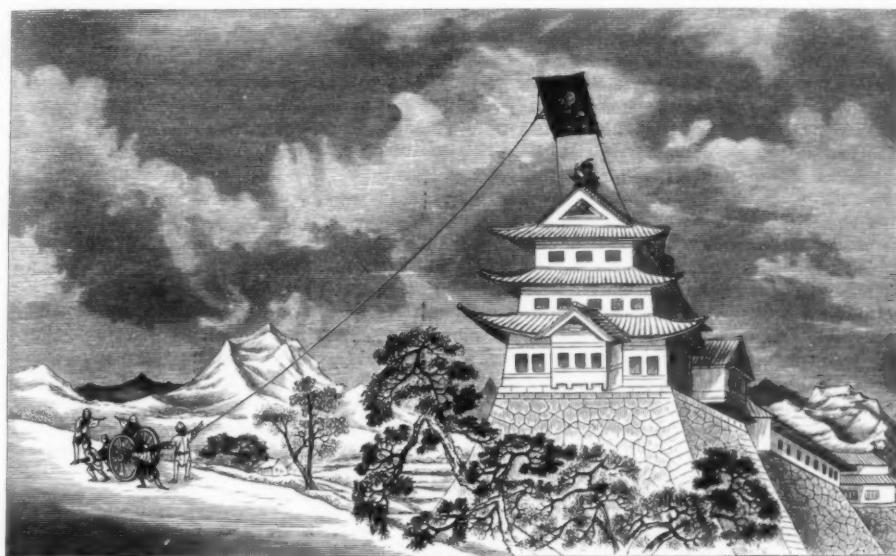
The Japanese boys understand well how to send "messengers" to the top of the kite, and how to entangle each other's kites. When they wish to, they can cut their rival's strings and send the proud prize fluttering to the ground. To do this, they take about ten feet of the string near the end, dip it in glue and then into bits of powdered glass, making a multitude of tiny blades as sharp as a razor, and looking, when magnified, like the top of a wall in which broken bottles have been set to keep off climbers. When two parties of boys agree to have a paper war near the clouds, they raise their kites and then attempt to cross the

strings. The most skillful boy saws off, with his glass saw, the cord of his antagonist.

The little boys fly kites that look for all the world like themselves. I have often seen chubby little fellows, scarcely able to walk, holding on to their paper likenesses. Would you believe it? Even the blind boys amuse themselves with these buzzing toys, and the tugging string that pulls like a live fish. This fact, as I have often seen it, loses its wonder, when you remember that a good kite in the hands of a boy who is not blind often will get out of sight. The Japanese blind boy enjoys

boys and young men would make kites as large as an elephant. Why do they not permit it? I can best answer the question by telling you a true story.

In nearly every large city in Japan there is, or was, a large castle, in which the prince of the province or his soldiers lived in time of peace, or fought in time of war. In Nagoya, in the province of Owari, in the central part of the main island, was seen the largest and finest of all the castles in Japan. They were built of thick walls of stone masonry from twenty to one hundred feet high, and divided



ATTEMPTING TO ROB THE GOLDEN FISH. (DRAWN BY A JAPANESE ARTIST.)

the fun with finger and ear. It is like Beethoven going in raptures over music, though stone deaf.

Square kites, with the main string set in the center, do not need bobs, but usually the Japanese boy attaches two very long tails made of rice-straw.

The usual size of a kite in Japan is two feet square, but often four feet; and I have seen many that were six feet high. Of course, such a kite needs very heavy cord, which is carried in a basket or on a big stick. They require a man, or a very strong boy, to raise them; and woe betide the small urchin who attempts to hold one in a stiff breeze! The humming monster in the air will drag him off his feet, pull him over the street, or into the ditch, before he knows it. Tie such a kite to a dog's tail, and no Japanese canine could even turn round to bite the string. If the Government allowed it,

from the outside land by moats filled with water. At the angles were high towers, built of heavy beams of wood covered with lime to make them fire-proof, and roofed with tiles. They had many gables like a pagoda, and port-holes or windows for the archers to shoot out their arrows on the besiegers. These windows were covered with copper or iron shutters. At the end of the topmost gable of the tower, with its tail in the air, was a great fish made of bronze or copper, from six to ten feet high, weighing thousands of pounds. It was a frightful monster of a fish, looking as if Jonah would be no more in its mouth than a sprat in a mackerel's. It stood on its lower gill, like a boy about to walk on his hands and head. It always reminded me of the old-fashioned candlesticks, in which a glass dolphin rampant, with very thick lips, holds a candle in his glass tail. In

Japan, however, the flukes of this bronze fish's tail, instead of a candle, were usually occupied by a live hawk, or sometimes an eagle, cormorant, or falcon. Half the birds in Fukui solemnly believed the castle towers to have been built for their especial perch and benefit. I often have seen every fish-tail of the castle occupied by crows. They were finishing their toilet, enjoying an after-dinner nap, or making speeches to each other, observing the rules of order no better than some assemblies in which several persons talk at once.

We sometimes say of a boy having wealthy parents, that "he was born with a silver spoon in his mouth." Now, as the Japanese eat with chopsticks, and use their silver for other purposes, they express nearly the same idea in other words.

In Japan, the better class of people—those who enjoy the privilege of wealth, education, or position—live either within or near the castle. One of the first things a well-born Japanese baby sees and learns to know out-doors is the upright bronze fish on the castle towers. Hence a Japanese is proud to say, "I was born within sight of the *shachihoko*" (the Japanese name of this fish). The princes of Owari were very proud, rich, and powerful; and they determined to erect gold instead of bronze fishes on their castle. So they engaged famous gold and silver smiths to make them a *shachihoko* ten feet high. Its tail, mouth, and fins were of solid beaten silver. Its scales were plates of solid gold. Its eyes were of black glass. It cost many thousands of dollars, and required about twenty men to lift it.

This was at Nagoya, a city famous for its bronzes, porcelain vases, cups, and dishes, its wonderful enamel work called *cloisonné*, and its gay fans. Thousands of the Japanese fans with which we cool our faces in summer were made in Nagoya. Well, when, after much toil and the help of great derricks and tackling, the great object was raised to its place, thousands of persons came from a distance to see the golden wonder. The people of Nagoya felt prouder than ever of their handsome city. In all kinds of weather, the golden fish kept its color and glittering brightness, never tarnishing or blackening like the common *shachihoko* on other castles. Morning and evening, the sunbeams gilded it with fresh splendor. The gold and the sunlight seemed to know each other, for they always kissed. The farmers' children, who lived miles distant in the country, clapped their hands with joy when the flashing flukes on the castle towers gleamed in the air. The travelers plodding along the road, as they mounted a hill, knew when the city was near, though they could not see anything but the gleam like a star of gold.

Alas that I should tell it! What was joy to

the many, was temptation to some. They were led to envy, then to covet, then to steal the prize. A man whose talents and industry might have made him rich and honored, became a robber,—first in heart, and then in act. He began to study how he might steal the golden fish. How was he to reach the roof of the tower? Even if he could swim the moat and scale the wall, he could not mount to the top story or the roof. The gates were guarded. The sentinels were vigilant, and armed with sword and spear. How should he reach the golden scales?

The picture tells the story. It was drawn by the famous Japanese artist in Tōkiō, Ozawa, and is true to the facts, as I have seen, or have been told them. A kite, twenty-five feet square, was made of thick paper, with very strong but light bamboo frame, with tough rope for a tether, and a pair of bobs strong enough to lift two hundred pounds. No man could hold such a kite. The rope was wound round a windlass and paid out by one person, while two men and three boys held the handcart. A very dark, cloudy night, when a brisk wind was up, was chosen. When all was ready at midnight, the hand-cart was run out along the moat, the robber with prying-tools in his belt, and his feet in loops at the end of the bobs, mounted on the perilous air-ship, more dangerous than a balloon. The wind was in the right direction, and by skillful movements of the cart and windlass, the robber, after swinging like a pendulum for a few minutes, finally alighted on the right roof. Fastening the bobs so as to secure his descent, he began the work of wrenching off the golden scales.

This he found no easy task. The goldsmiths had riveted them so securely that they defied his prying, and the soft, tough metal could not be torn off. He dared not make any clinking noise with hammer or chisel, lest the sentinels should hear him. After what appeared to be several hours' work, he had loosened only two scales, worth scarcely more than fifty dollars.

To make a long story short, the man was caught. The sentinels were awakened, and the crime detected. The robber was sentenced to die a cruel death,—to be boiled in oil. His accomplices received various other degrees of punishment. The Prince of Owari issued a decree forbidding the flying of any kites above a certain small size. Henceforth the grand old kites which the boys of the province had flown in innocent fun were never more to be seen.

As for the big golden fish, it was afterward taken down from the castle in Nagoya, and kept in the prince's treasure-house. When I saw it, it was in Tōkiō at the museum. It was afterward taken to Vienna and exhibited at the Exposition in 1873.

EXTRACTS FROM THE JOURNAL OF A BLUE-COAT GIRL.

[The readers of *St. NICHOLAS* will find all about the Blue-Coats in the very first article of the first number of the magazine. Girls were once educated there as well as boys, but the girls' school after a while was removed to Hertford.]

March 30th, 1689.—Oh! what shall I do? Such a little thing as I to be left all alone! Father! mother! where are you? Can not you speak to me from the better world where you are gone away? It is so lonely, that I must keep this little journal to talk all to myself. I promised dear papa that I would do it. Little he thought, when he took so much pains to teach me to read and write, that I should soon have no other comfort. Can it be possible, that only last week, dear mamma was with me, sitting so pale and gentle in that chair, with her lovely white hair and darling old face? And now, where is she? And what shall I do? There is no one to love me, or take care of me any more.

My uncle came to see about the funeral. He is very cold and formal, and not a bit like mamma. It does not seem as if he could be her brother. He is old and poor, and badly dressed, and thin. He can not do anything for me, he says, he is such a poor man. His eyes look wild sometimes; he frightens me. Ah! I cannot stay here. Everything must be sold he says, and I must even part with mother's chair. Her Bible I *will* keep. No one shall take that from me, if I starve.

How it rains and blows! What a stormy night! and she is lying alone there, in that dreadful church-yard, under the black, dripping trees. Oh, mother! mother!

April 3rd.—All is sold and gone, even mother's chair and bed. Uncle John gave me money to pay the landlady, and said, "It is better so, child." Perhaps it is; but I've kept the portraits, and mother's clothes, and her Bible and Prayer-Book. Mother was a good Church-woman, if father *was* a Round Head. I don't know what a Round Head means, but it can't be anything bad, except that poor papa lost all his money very long ago, before I was born; and we were *so* poor always. Before papa gave up his living, mamma said we had such a happy home in a beautiful parsonage, by an ivy-towered church down in Devonshire, and not far off were great cliffs, with thickets of gorse and fern and bramble at the top, and the wide sea tossing and shining below. But I was not born then. There were other children, but they are all dead now. How I wish *one*—just one—of them had

lived! I should like to see the sea (I who have never been out of London in my life), and to play on the beach with those little brothers and sisters. But I forget—they would all be grown up now. Mother used to talk so much about Dorothy, who had fair hair like me, and was so very lovely. I wonder if I look a bit like her? She would have been married now, and I should have lived with her. Somehow, I feel as if I would rather have had a brother who was strong and big, to run races on the beach mother told me of. What a baby I talk like! Yet, I'm not much more than a baby, though the neighbors tell me I'm "old-fashioned," and I do feel *very* old, at least fifteen, though I'm only twelve. But nursing poor mamma, and the funeral, and all the dreadful things, have made me feel *so very, very* old.

Uncle says he will send me to school, to Christ's Church "Spittle." I wonder what it's like, and if I shall be very unhappy there? Anything is better than this empty room, with the eyes in the pictures following me about, as I sit on mother's chest; and oh, I *will* not cry so! I will try —

April 6th.—I've been here at the school almost a week, and oh! it's dreadful! So many girls staring at me! And these long rows of beds, and I can't even sleep alone. The high walls seem to shut me in from mother, and the church-yard is far away. The great courts are bare and desolate, and oh, how hard the mistress is! If she beats me, I know I shall run away, I *know* I shall! oh, mother! mother! But where could I go? Our good Kate, that lived with us so long, is married away in Scotland. I could not find her. And the public suppers!—(the dinners are the worst!) The great tables, and the noise and staring of people, and slamming of trenchers, and clashing of knives and pewter mugs, and the great joints of mutton that smell so, and the coarse boiled beef, *so* salt. Yesterday was Thursday, and there was fresh beef in hunches, and the girl who sat next me, who squints so, said, "Don't you hate gags?" In the morning there are great chunks of bread she calls "crugs," and small beer in great buckets. But the broth, so thick, and slab, and choking, I can't help minding *that*. What an ungrateful child I am, to feel so, when I ought to be thankful to be here, and not think of the nice things I used to make and share with mother. Uncle was very good to get me here. He is a *very* poor man, he says. I know he lives all alone in a dreary old

lodging in a dingy street. I may go and see him sometimes, and I am glad, for he has taken care of the portraits and mother's chest for me, which has her wedding dress and things. How pretty she must have looked in the sky-blue brocade with white roses! She was pretty, even when she died, an old lady.

Ah, well! I'll try to make the best of things. I am young and healthy; and, perhaps, when I leave school, they may get me a place in the country, with lanes and hedge-rows such as mother used to talk of in Devonshire, where the wild roses hang over the red banks, with fern, and briony, and daisies. How she used to talk of those things! Just before she died, she showed me a sprig of speed-well in her Bible, all brown and faded. It was a pretty blue flower once, like Dorothy's eyes, and she gathered it the day she left home forever. My eyes are blue, too. Father gave up his living to join Cromwell, but when the King came in, all was lost, and we were always poor. But being a Round Head must be something noble, after all.

April 11th, 1689.—This has been a very great holiday, for my uncle took me to see the coronation. The King is a very fine man, to be sure, and Queen Mary looked lovely in her robes. My uncle knows a verger of the Abbey, and he put us into a little nook in the clere-story, where we could look down on everything. I never dreamed of anything so beautiful; and the new music by Mr. Handel! oh! it was like heaven! Such splendid lords and ladies! I wondered if I should ever wear anything besides this coarse, blue stuff and a bib-apron. Mother was lady enough to have been there in her sky-blue brocade. Some people that were near us hissed softly and said he was n't the right king, but she *must* have been the right queen, in her robes all velvet and ermine, and she so gentle and mild. She smiled like an angel.

May 15th, 1689.—I don't write much in my journal, it makes me too sad, and I don't have much time. The other day, as we were coming out of chapel, boys first and girls after, I saw a boy sitting on the steps with his face hidden in his hands. It was against the rules to speak, but I *did* linger and ask him what was the matter, when the rest were gone. He said his father and mother were dead, and he wanted to go to sea, but his grandfather would send him here, and it was very unkind. He was to be educated here first, he said, and *then* go to sea. But he wanted to go to sea *now*. He would run away. A great tear trickled through his fingers. I could not help wondering why a big, strong boy should cry, and then I remembered how sad I had been, and how alike we were in our lives. I talked to him a little, and said it would be much better to wait and get an education, and then he

might go into the navy, instead of being a common sailor. He said I was a brave girl, and I was right. His grandfather was an admiral, and he meant to be one too. But he believed his grandfather hated him, and had put him into this bad place, where he was flogged almost every day, and he meant to be a great man some day, on purpose to spite him. "He hated my father," said he, "because he was a music master, and married my mother against his will, and he never spoke to my mother again. But my father was not bad; he was good and kind, and played beautifully on his Stradivarius."

I ran away then, but I had been seen, and I got a whipping and bread and water. I did n't care, though, for I was glad to comfort him. His name was Charles Stanley.

June 10th, 1690.—My uncle comes often to see me, and gets leave to take me out for long walks in the country on holidays. I love to walk with him in the lanes near Kensington, and to gather flowers in the fields,—mother's favorite flowers. One day he took me to see the beasts at the Royal Exchange. How the lion did roar and frighten me! Charles Stanley was there, feeding the elephant with apples. I wonder he was n't afraid.

July 6th, 1690.—This evening my uncle took me to see a great illumination and fire-works because of a great victory, the battle of the Boyne. It was a very important battle, he said, and had seated King William and Queen Mary firmly on the throne, and the Papists could not make head again. I don't know much of politics, but I hope no harm will happen to the Queen. My father never liked Papists. The illumination was splendid. Every house had ever so many candles; for if a house was not lighted, the crowd was furious, and threatened to tear it down, screaming "No Popery!" like mad. On the Thames were lighted barges, full of splendid people, and the King and Queen on the steps of Whitehall, and wonderful fire-works of Britannia and Neptune, and Plenty, and Fame, and Glory. My uncle explained all to me very kindly.

September 8th, 1690.—Charles Stanley comes to talk to me whenever he can get a chance. I generally get punished for it; but I don't tell him so. He says he is, though. One day he brought me a nosegay, and wanted me to promise to be his sweetheart, but I said it was nonsense, and he went away quite angry. He says he likes school better now, and studies hard, though the master is cruel sometimes. I'm sorry I made him angry.

May 26th, 1692.—My uncle came again to-day, and took me to see the rejoicings over the great naval victory of La Hogue over the French and old King James. He must be very bad, to make so much trouble, and cause so many people to

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be killed. I hope Charles Stanley wont go into the navy till there's peace. It was a good deal like the other illumination, only finer. A great, big ship, all of fire, was on the river, and the whole city was as light as day. There was service at St. Paul's, very solemn and beautiful with grand music, and the whole school went. People seemed

May 15th, 1694.—My uncle came to-day, and talked a great deal about something very bad, he called the Bank—the new Bank of England. I could n't understand it at all, but he looked quite wild. He said this banking was a dreadful, fatal thing, a great monster that would ruin and devour everybody. Banks and kings, he said, could never



COMFORTING CHARLES STANLEY.

mad with joy, the rejoicings lasted three days, and the bells never stopped ringing all the time.

July 18th, 1692.—Charles Stanley ran up to me to-day, and said, "You *shall* be my little wife, some day." And he cut off a lock of my hair, just in front, where it shows, and put something in my hand and ran away. It was the half of a sixpence! I wish he would n't! The girls all tease me so. But I will keep the piece.

exist together. Some people said that the bank would help the King, but he knew better. Banks were Republican institutions. This was only another of the plots, plots, plots! He raved like a madman. I asked him if it would hurt poor folks like us. He said he hoped not. He "was poor, very poor." I'm sure he looks so—all thin and sickly, and his clothes so threadbare. I wish I was old enough to take care of him. He hardly

looks as if he had enough to eat. Poor, poor uncle !

Nov. 10th, 1694.—I don't like to think of there being so many executions, and plots, and dreadful things. My uncle wanted me to go to the hangings to-day of the enemies of the King, but I would not see one for the world. There is a great deal of small-pox in London now. It would be awful if it got into Christ's Church. Some say the Queen has got it, some the King, some the Duchess of Marlborough. It could not make her much uglier. I saw her in her state coach one day. There were prayers for the Queen in the Abbey yesterday.

Dec. 27th, 1694.—We are all dressed in black. The poor, good Queen is dead. It is a sad Christmas holidays. Everybody is heart-broken, and the King in agonies of grief, people say; for he loved her dearly, and was with her night and day, though she died of that dreadful small-pox. What will happen now? She was so good! They say she has founded a hospital for poor sailors, and helped the Huguenots, who were so cruelly used in France. What a dreadful thing it would be if King James should come back! My uncle thinks he will, and, at any rate, that he and his son will make trouble if they can. There is peace now, at any rate, and the good Queen was glad of that when she died. She was reconciled to Princess Anne on her death-bed. People are very uneasy, and there are plots upon plots. If Marlborough hadn't been a traitor, he might have helped us now. My uncle told me all this politics. The Queen is lying in state at Whitehall, and crowds go to see her, notwithstanding small-pox.

Jan. 1st, 1695.—Our good friend, the verger, let us see the funeral in the Abbey. Oh, how I cried! The organ roared like a thunder-storm, and then it was like a sweet, sad voice. The procession was very fine, with four royal state mourning coaches,—all black and silver,—and a grand hearse with six pairs of splendid black horses, and black-and-white plumes three feet high, and embroidered hangings. Almost everybody wept as it passed; but it was horrible! there were some bad people who hissed, and groaned, and even spat. They must have been Jacobites or Papists. The poor King was as pale and white as a ghost. It was a very, very sad day.

July 12th, 1695.—What a big girl I am growing. I must leave here soon and go into service. A great, big, grand city lady came to-day to see about taking me, dressed in a fine tabby gown, with lace lappets, and such a high head! with long pinners and streamers. She came in a fine coach, and yet she looked so cross and asked so many questions that I was glad she did not take me. Perhaps the next one will be nicer. Oh! why

must I go away from here? I have not been very unhappy, and I am used to it. These old cloisters are pleasant in the sunshine, and I like the girls and they like me. I am never beaten now, and though they make a servant of me, as they do of all the big girls, I do not mind that. It prepares me for the future. I do not mind work if it is not too hard. They say, perhaps I shall be 'prenticed. I just wish I did know what was to become of me.

August 15th, 1695.—Charles Stanley came to bid me good-by. He says that he is going into the navy, and that his grandfather is kinder to him now, for he is ill and old, and has no one to take care of him but a sister who is older than he. "This will be my last chance to see you, Millicent," said he, "for I am going to stay at his house, and from there into the navy. By and by when I am my own master, we will be married, dear Milly, and you shall be a lady, as you deserve."

Oh, how sweet it sounded! But I said I was a poor girl, and I could not promise myself to him, for his family would be angry, and when he went into the world he would find some real lady to marry, and be sorry he was bound to me. And he said, I was a real lady, and he would never have any other, and I looked too good for him in my blue stuff gown. He showed me his half-sixpence and I showed him mine, but I did not promise. It was hard.

Sept. 8th, 1695.—My uncle is ill, and I got leave to go and see him. He was lying all alone in a wretched garret, pale and ill, with no one to take care of him, but he said he was better, and he would not let me stay. On the way home a number of wild young men, half tipsy, ran up to me, and one of them took me by the arm, and tried to pull me away. I screamed and was dreadfully frightened, when who should run up but Charles Stanley! It was strange that he should have been there, when his grandfather lives near St. James. It was close by Christ's Church, and he gave a whoop, and a dozen blue-coats came running up. They gave the young lords (they must have been lords, they were so richly dressed) such a beating! Charles Stanley kicked the one who spoke to me quite out of sight. Then he went to the outer gate with me, and tried to make me promise again, but I held out. He will soon be off, he says.

Sept. 9th, 1695.—I felt as if I ought to go to my uncle again this evening, but I hardly dared, until I thought of putting on a big pair of spectacles of my father's, and carrying a stick. The girls all laughed, and one said she would n't mind a word from a handsome gentleman; and another said, not even Charles Stanley would know me. I was glad of that. So I went out with the glasses on, stooping and walking lame and leaning on the

stick, with my hood over my face, and no one even looked at me. Uncle was better.

Sept. 10th, 1695.—A dreadful thing has happened. My poor uncle was found dead in his bed the morning after I was there. He must have died all alone in the night. His funeral is to be to-morrow. Poor old uncle! And now I am truly all alone, without a friend. If I could have dared to promise Charles Stanley! But I was right. He is so handsome and so brave that he must go into another world from me. I wonder when they will get me a place! If I could only be his servant!

Sept. 11th, 1695.—To-day at dinner there was a great buzz as I came in, and the mistress came up monstrous polite, and said: "There's great news for you, Miss. Something very wonderful has happened." I could n't think what she meant by "Miss," I was always plain Milly before. "Your uncle has left you a big fortune," says she. "His will was found under his pillow, and he was worth, oh, so much! I don't remember." Everything spun round, and I turned giddy and sick. They brought me some water and then some wine. Poor, poor uncle! He must have been crazy to live so. It is very strange; it don't seem real. It can't be! I am afraid the first thing I thought of was Charles Stanley. He did not come near me that day, when they were all wishing me joy, and were so polite.

Sept. 11th, evening.—They have given me a pretty room to myself to-night, and it is so still and pleasant, after the great, stifling dormitory. There is an oriel window looking out upon the court, and some violets and snow-drops in the window, and a fine bow-pot on the table of spring flowers. How grateful I ought to be! It is very quiet and still, and the great clock has just struck twelve, yet no one comes to make me put out the light. How the moonlight falls on the cloisters. I cannot sleep. I think and think, and everything seems to be bubbling and boiling around me. I wonder if the wine has got into my head? I have never tasted it since mother died.

Sept. 12th.—Mistress said this morning that it was not strange after so great a change and such a fortune left me, that I could not sleep for joy. I don't think I feel any joy. So much money will be a great burden. But I will give a great deal of it away to the poor, and then live in a sweet little house in the country, like mother's, among green lanes and fields. * * * * * My uncle was buried to-day; all the school was there, and it was a very handsome funeral, which was a great comfort to me. He was so shabby when he was alive! But I saw nothing of Charles Stanley. After the funeral, who should come to Christ's Church to see me but the Lord Mayor's

lady, all in velvet and satin. I was never so much frightened in my life, and she so kind, and grand, and polite. And she said: "My dear, don't be frightened, but there is something that pleases me very much. A blue-coat boy has had a fortune, the same as yours, left him on the very same day, and we think it would be a very pretty thing to make it a match between you."

I grew sick again, and then I burst into tears, and she was so kind, that somehow I got bold enough to say that I loved some one whom, perhaps, I should never see again, but I could never, never marry any one else. I was very young, and why, why need I think about it? And then, she, so kind all the time, said that nothing should ever be done against my will, and she wiped my eyes with her own 'kerchief, and said: "My dear young friend, don't be worried. I only ask you to *see* this young man of whom I speak, for he is every way worthy of you, and you may, in time, forget the other and learn to value and esteem him as he deserves." I knew better, and I said, at first, that I never would see him; but she said ever so much, and insisted that I should go with her, and made me get into her grand gold coach, and go to her grand house. To think of my riding in a coach with the Lady Mayoress! I was so bewildered I hardly knew anything till she took me into a great room, and there, standing by a fine harpsichord, was Charles Stanley! I was wondering, as if in a dream, how he got there, when the Lady Mayoress said: "This is the young man, my dear, of whom I spoke." I gave a cry, and I don't know what happened next, only we were alone, and Charles was holding me up. Everything was right after that. Charles told me his grandfather was dead, and he had a great fortune, and it should be all mine. He wished I had n't one too, but that could n't be helped, and we would be married directly and be ever so happy. The best of it is that he is not going into the navy, but we are going to live at his grandfather's seat in Devonshire. Think of it! In Devon! Not so very far from Mary Church, either; and he will take me there.

I wonder how much the Lady Mayoress knew? Charles could not tell me.

Sept. 18th, 1695.—Such a beautiful wedding as we have had to-day. There was a grand dinner for all the school afterward. Charles was dressed in blue satin, led by two of the prettiest girls, and I in blue, with a green apron and yellow petticoat (but all of silk), led by two boys. All the school went before, singing and strewing flowers, and thus we went from Chepe to Guildhall, where we were married by no less than the Dean of St. Paul's! The Lord Mayor, his lady, and a great many fine people were there, and I felt very happy, but I must

say rather shame-faced. A great many handsome presents were sent me, and the Lord Mayor gave me a silver tankard, and his lady a silver porringer. All the dear girls gave me something; one a pincushion, another a shift that she had made, and a great Bible from the mistress. And some cried, and all kissed me good-by and wished me joy, and said I

had been a credit to the school. I was sorry to part from them all, and did not know how I loved the place till I left it. To-morrow we go down to Hartley End, the grand seat of the admiral in Devon. I wish it were a cottage, but I suppose it can't be helped. I am afraid I shall be too happy ever to write in my journal again.

MILLICENT STANLEY.

"Two wealthy citizens are lately dead, and left their estates, one to a Blue-Coat boy and the other to a Blue-Coat girl in Christ's Hospital,—the extraordinariness of which has led some of the magistrates to carry it on to a match, which is ended in a public wedding—he in his habit of blue satin, led by two of the girls, and she in blue, with an apron green and petticoat yellow, all of sarsnet, led by two of the boys of the house, through Cheapside to Guildhall Chapel, where they were married by the Dean of St. Paul's, she given by my Lord Mayor. The wedding dinner, it seems, was given in the Hospital Hall."—*Pepys to Mrs. Steward, Sept. 20th, 1665.*

HIS OWN MASTER.

BY J. T. TROWBRIDGE.

CHAPTER XII.

JACOB IS LEFT BEHIND.

It was still pouring heavily when the tug's skiff came alongside the steamboat, and the drenched passengers were taken on board. An excited crowd awaited them at the gangway, among whom Jacob noticed Florie's mother, and the mother of the twins.

"Oh, girls!" exclaimed Mrs. Chipperly, her arms extended, "how did it happen? I told you there was danger! You'll ketch your death-colds! And just look at your dresses! They're a sight to behold! Dory, my dear, where's your hat?"

"Don't talk of hats and dresses, when we're half drowned!" said Dory, as she reached the deck and stood dripping. "I thought much as could be I was gone, one spell, but somebody pulled me up where I could hold on to the boat."

Perhaps she did not know that that somebody was Jacob. Nor did he think of taking any credit for what he had done. He felt that he must be an object of horror to everybody, as he was to himself.

"Oh, Jacob!" said Florie's mother, as she received the dripping girl in her arms.

Florie had just said, "Don't blame him or anybody—he saved my life!" But Jacob had not heard that; nor did he know that the mother spoke his name in an impulse of real gratitude.

He did not get out of the boat. When all the other drenched ones were on board the steamer, the oarsmen asked him if he was n't going too.

"No!" said he. "I am going with you to look for him."

"It's no use; you can't help," they said.

"But I am going!" he answered, firmly.

The steamer's whistle was blowing. She was off the bar now, and was ready to start. After so much loss of time, the captain was anxious to get under way. Having helped the others up, he noticed Jacob still in the boat, and called to him:

"Come aboard! We must be off now!"

"Not without finding *him*!" replied Jacob, in almost savage despair.

"If there was any hope of saving him, or any use in waiting, we would stay," said the captain. "But we can do nothing. The tug will continue the search. Come aboard!"

He spoke in a tone of command, but not unkindly, for he was the last man to think of blaming Jacob for such an accident.

"Go?" said the boy. "And leave *him*?" He spoke as if some utter impossibility, some base and criminal act, had been proposed to him. "He is the only friend I have in the world! I can't go!"

"Then we must leave you," said the captain.

"I can't help it," Jacob replied, in a passion of grief. "I shall stay with the tug."

"I understand your feelings," said the captain, touched by the boy's devotion and despair. "But don't be foolish. Take a friend's advice. You were not much to blame; and your staying can do no good. I'll take you to Cincinnati. No matter about your fare, if you have n't any money."

"Has n't my fare been paid?" said Jacob, starting from his stupor of woe.

"No. Mr. Pinkey said he would pay it. But he had n't yet paid his own. He would have done it, of course, before he left the boat. Come aboard, my lad! You have n't got your baggage."

"That don't amount to much," said Jacob. "But I'll go for it," he added, after a moment's hesitation.

His anguish for the loss of his friend had up to this time been of so wholly unselfish a nature, that he had not once thought of his little black traveling-bag and its modest contents, or of any such trivial matter. He had indeed felt in how utterly desolate a condition he would be, in Cincinnati or anywhere, without his friend,—if that was selfish. But now, at the captain's kindly meant words, a more sordid consideration intruded upon his grief.

Not only were all his clothes left in the little state-room,—everything, in fact, which he possessed in the world, besides the drenched garments he had on,—but all his money was in the belt which Alphonse wore about his body.

This was an additional reason for his remaining, which he had not considered before. He thought it so mean and selfish a motive, that he did not speak of it now.

"Please to take charge of *his* things," he said to the captain. "I will take mine." Then to the men in the boat: "Wait for me one minute!"—and he hurried to the state-room for his bag.

The lighted saloon, through which he passed and repassed, presented a cheerful contrast to the storm and gloom without. The table was set; the supper waited. The cheer and comfort he was leaving for darkness and uncertainty, did not tempt him; it seemed rather like a mockery of his affliction. How could any one eat and drink and be merry in the cabin that night, while he who had so lately been the bright star of all was in the black depths of the river?

He knew the room occupied by Florie and her mother. He paused just a moment at the door, longing to know that all was well with the young girl after her narrow escape. Perhaps he would have wished to speak with them,—to beg their forgiveness and bid them good-bye, since he was going, never to see them again. But he could not stop. He heard Florie's voice, and was grateful. What if she too had been lost? The bare thought of what would have been his feelings in such a case was too terrible.

The saloon was almost deserted. Nobody gave him any attention as he hurried out. The passengers on the sheltered parts of the decks were too intent watching the second boat from the steamer to give much heed to Jacob. The yawl had gone up and down in the rain, searching the river and the shore, and the fallen trees along by the shore, for traces of the body, and was now returning, dragging something heavy in its wake.

Jacob felt a shudder of dread, as he saw it at first in the obscurity. But a flash of lightning, flooding

the scene with one swift, dazzling gleam, showed him what it was.

The water-logged boat was in tow. The passengers, crowding to look over at it, did not notice him. The captain too was occupied giving orders, and he dropped unobserved into the tug's boat.

The men pushed off. Jacob gave one backward look, and felt a sharp sting of regret, as he saw the groups on the deck and heard the muffled rush of the great paddles rolling slowly to keep the steam-boat in the stream. The deck-hands were hauling in the hawser. Then came the sound as of a small cataract, as the water-logged boat, raised by the steamer's tackle, bow foremost, poured its contents into the river. Over all was heard the voice of the captain coolly giving his orders for the start. The paddles stopped, then rolled the other way, the whistle gave a wild snort, and the steamboat and the tug parted company.

The storm was now nearly over. It was still raining a little where Jacob was; but the clouds in the west were broken, showing a peaceful sunset sky—a sea of liquid gold overtopped by avalanches of fire-tinted snow. Toward that gate-way of glory the steamer glided away, and disappeared; while over Jacob's head still hung the rainy canopy, bordered in the west with a fringe of surging flame.

CHAPTER XIII.

DEPARTURE OF THE TUG-BOAT.

IT was not until the excitement caused by the accident had subsided a little, that anybody thought of making inquiry for Jacob.

"I did n't mean to let him off," said the captain, coming in late to the supper-table. "I thought if I got him to come aboard for his baggage, I could keep him. But I was busy for a few minutes after, and when I thought of him again he was gone. He is certainly a plucky little fellow! How is your daughter, Mrs. Fairlak?"

The question was addressed to Florie's mother, who was also sitting down to a late cup of tea.

"Florence is quite comfortable," she replied, without her usual drawl. "I've been so absorbed in my care of her, that I feel myself quite guilty—I've scarcely thought of that brave boy at all! She is sure that he saved her life, and that she came very near drowning him,—she does n't know what saved them. It is terrible to think of his being left behind! What will become of him? He has no money."

"Are you sure of that?" said the captain.

"He told me that Mr. Pinkey had his money."

"And Pinkey has gone to the bottom with it!" remarked Mrs. Chipperly, taking some nice bits from the table, to carry to the state-room for her

daughters. "No wonder the boy was so anxious to stay and have the body recovered!"

"I don't think the money was his chief motive, by any means!" said Mrs. Fairlake. "He idolized Mr. Pinkey." Something of the drawl came into her voice again as she added: "He thought him a perfect model of a fine gentleman! You can hardly wonder at it; Pinkey's manners were extraordinary, and Jacob is very young."

"If my head had n't been full of other matters," said the captain, "I would have kept the boy aboard long enough at least to have a purse made up for him."

"Oh, why did n't you?" exclaimed Mrs. Fairlake. "I suppose I am wicked, but I must own that I am a great deal more troubled about him than I am about Mr. Pinkey. Mr. Pinkey does n't seem to me to be a very genuine character; and somehow his death does n't seem to be real. If he should walk into the cabin now, with that pretty mustache and that exquisite smile of his, I don't think I should be at all surprised."

Jacob was at this time in even a more pitiable situation than anybody imagined. The steamboat was gone; and now the tug-boat, which he had expected would remain, perhaps all night if the body was not sooner found, was going too.

It was growing dark; and after dragging the river-bottom and cruising up and down until further search seemed useless, the captain recalled his men.

The tug was laid up by the bank a little distance down the river. The boat came alongside, the men got out, and it was taken in tow.

Drenched, haggard, broken-hearted, Jacob stood upon the tug, with his little black bag in hand. The moon shone upon the river and the wooded shores. The water gurgled mournfully under the wales. The hands were preparing to cast off.

"Which is the captain?" Jacob inquired.

"There at the wheel," said one of the men who had been in the boat with him.

Jacob approached the little wheel-house, and, standing in the moonlight, spoke to a face that looked out at him through the open window.

"I thought you would stay and hunt longer!" he burst forth with a sob, after trying in vain to control his voice.

"Stay?" echoed the captain. "We can't stay all night. We've done more than we agreed to, and now we must be off."

"Where are you going?" said Jacob, mastering himself at last.

"To Pittsburgh. Where do you want to go?"

"I don't want to go anywhere!"

"You are easily satisfied, then," said the captain. He continued more kindly, seeing the utter desolation of the boyish figure trembling before

him in the moonlight: "If you want to go to Pittsburg, or any place up the river, stay aboard: I'll give you your passage. It's a hard case, I know."

"What should I go back up the river for?" said Jacob. "I might have gone on to Cincinnati, where I have an uncle; but I can't go back home,—I have no home! I have n't a friend in the world, now that he —"

"Well, make up your mind what you'll do," said the captain, "for we're off."

"My mind is made up," replied Jacob.

"Going ashore?"

The boy could not answer. A moment later he stood alone on the bank. The men, who felt a great deal more kindness for him than they knew how to express, called to him, and begged him to come aboard.

He had not a voice even to thank them; but there he stood, silent, with only the great river and the solemn woods about him, and watched the tug steam slowly away.

CHAPTER XIV.

NIGHT IN THE WILDERNESS.

IT was soon out of sight. The sound of paddles and panting steam died in the distance, and Jacob heard only the noise of night-singing insects about him, and the roar of a torrent, caused by the rain, pouring down the bank into the river just above the fallen trees. Then of a sudden he felt all the loneliness and danger of his situation, and a sense of fear came over him.

He was in a wilderness—he knew not how far from any human abode. He was wet and chilled, for the weather had turned cool after the rain. He had declined to share the hasty supper which the tug's men offered him: he was not hungry then, and he was not hungry now—his heart was too full of misery. But he felt the need of food. He felt the need of warmth, and, more than all, the need of human aid and sympathy.

He took a last look at the spot where his friend had been lost,—where the water now shimmered as brightly in the moonbeams as if there were never such a thing as loss or grief in the world,—then, with a great sigh, turned away.

It was, after all, a sort of relief that he could not find what he sought. He would have shuddered to see any human-looking thing afloat, or washed up against the bank. He would have been terrified to meet his dead friend there alone.

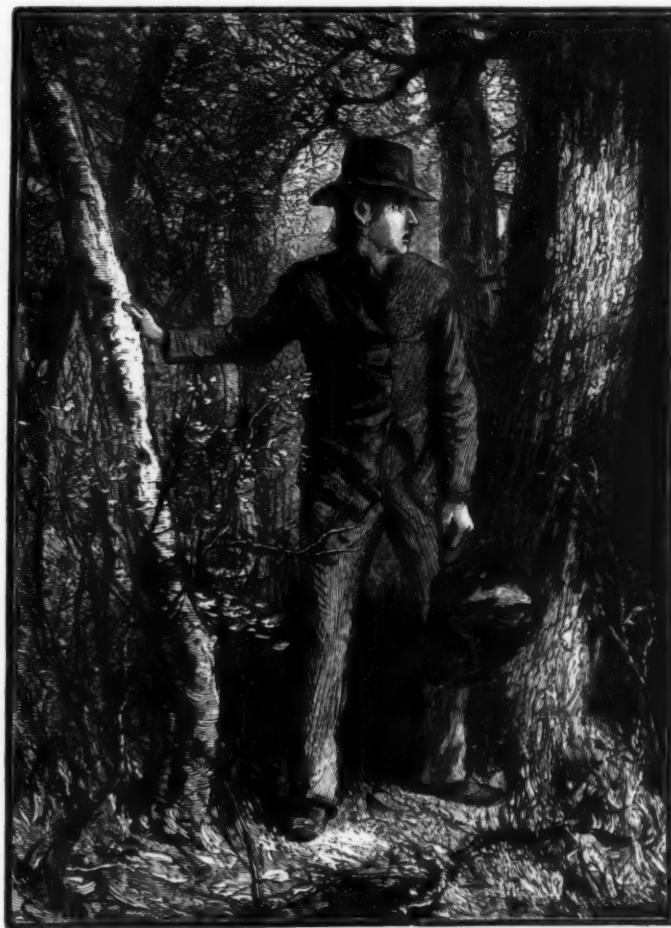
He thought there must be a farming country a little back from the river, and that he might find help and shelter in some house, not far away; so he at once climbed up into the woods.

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The land continued to rise, and he went on and up until he reached more level ground; but it was all woods—woods—as far as he went and as far as he could see. He tore his way through the wet undergrowth; he stumbled at fallen trunks; he gazed eagerly forward, and stopped to listen often, with a heart beating hard with fatigue and fear.

raccoon “whinneyed,” or an owl filled the hollows of the woods with its unearthly “Who! who!”

The moonlight slanted down through the thick boughs and amidst the tall stems, making little silver patches of light in masses of shadow, and silver gleams on the trunks and bare ground,—gleams which wavered as the boughs moved. He



“ALL WOODS—WOODS—AS FAR AS HE WENT.”

For there was something fearful in the solitude. The wind swept over the forest-tops with a low, mournful roar. Pattering drops fell, shaken in little showers from the boughs. A limb creaked overhead. As he moved on, the sound of his own footsteps on the dead twigs had in it something ominous and startling. When he stood still, a

was more than once deceived by these glimmerings, thinking he saw a way out of the forest.

Then came a rush of selfish thoughts and self-reproaches.

What was he there for? He could do no good to himself or anybody else. If Alphonse was drowned, why, he was drowned, and that was the

end of him. As for the money, he wished he had never let him take it; but now, he did not want it—he had a horror of it! Besides, the search for it was hopeless. Why had n't he stayed on board the steamboat, as any other boy would have done?

And again Jacob asked himself, as he had often done before, when his conscience or his good impulses had kept him from things which seemed pleasant:

"Why can't I do as other boys do who don't care? Joe Berry never would have left a comfortable berth on board a steamboat, to do as I have done,—no, not if his own brother was lost in the river! He'd have looked out for himself. What was it made me stop off? Mr. Pinkey was n't always a good friend to me."

Then he thought of all that gentleman's faults, and even blamed him for getting drowned and putting him to so much trouble.

It is a comfort to know that such unworthy thoughts as these did not continue long. The boy's stout heart soon rose from its terrible depression. He was not sorry that he had stayed, though he had stayed to so little purpose. He remembered only the better qualities of his friend, and felt that he could never have been happy—that he should always have hated and despised himself—if he had left him to his sudden and dreadful fate, and gone on in the steamboat, caring only for his own safety and convenience.

It is sometimes worth the while to obey conscience, and follow our better impulses, at whatever seeming sacrifice, if only for the after satisfaction of feeling that any other course would have been wrong. That precious satisfaction is, to every noble nature, more than all worldly ends unrighteously attained. Many a man, and many a youth, would to-day give up all he has ever gained by unworthy means, to be able to say to his own soul, "I resisted the temptation—I did right!"

But now that he had done all he could do, Jacob saw that he ought to lose no time in caring for himself. He became discouraged, at last, in his efforts to find a house in the direction he had taken, and turned back. Over humps and hollows and through underbrush he went, and was glad to see the shining river burst upon his sight again, as he came down out of the woods.

There were frequent villages scattered along the shores, and he now resolved to keep on down the river until he should come to one.

He had started, walking very fast, when a noise, different from the sound of the wind in the tree-tops, arrested him. It was the hoarse panting breath of a steamboat coming up the river.

As it approached, its red signal lantern made broken reflections in the water before the rushing

prow. Its smoke-pipe spouted a lurid fountain of cloud and fire. The cabin, with its doors and many windows, looked like a delicate shell full of light, as it advanced steadily up the stream, in the misty moonshine.

It reminded Jacob of the companionship and cheer he had lost, and made his present loneliness seem all the wilder, all the more remote from human aid. It came abreast of him, almost within reach of the sound of his voice, had he chosen to hail it; then passed on, rolling its white wake in the moon, and trailing its banner of smoke sideways far off over the darkened water. It was gone, and Jacob resumed his tramp.

He kept along the summit of the bank, which sloped down some forty feet to the river, then at its usual summer level, though not very low. At high-water, that lofty bank was brimmed, and even overflowed. There was a strip of grass along by its edge, and above that rose the wooded hills.

He walked about half an hour, meeting with no adventures, and finding no signs of any clearing or settlement on the heights at his right.

Then the curve of the bank which he followed changed abruptly. It took a sudden turn to the north, while the river swept away toward the southwest. The woods, too, receded suddenly; and he soon found that he had come to some sort of inlet or broad creek, which lay directly across his course.

CHAPTER XV.

THE RIVER PEDDLER.

As he stood on the bank, looking across the misty gulf, uncertain what to do, he heard a dog bark. The sound came from the water's edge below, and only a few rods up the creek.

The moonlight slanted down the slope, and showed him some sort of craft by the shore. At the farther end of it, a warm glow—ruddier than the moonlight, and confined to a small space—shone upon the bank and the water. The thing looked to Jacob like some gigantic lightning-bug.

It proved to be a little box of a steamboat, occupied by a man and a dog. The dog leaped on the deck, and kept up a furious barking at the boy as he approached. The man was soon visible, cooking something at a curious little stove under a projection of the deck, or cabin roof, over the bow.

Jacob stopped at the top of the bank, afraid of the dog. The man silenced the barking, and called to him:

"Want anything in my line?"

"Yes," said Jacob.

A pleasant odor from the cooking was wafted up to him, and he saw that the man was frying fish.

"Come down here, then," said the man.

"Wont the dog bite me?"

"Not without you go to take something from the Ark."

"From the what?"

"The Ark. I aint exac'ly Father Noah; but that's the name of my craft. Have n't ye heard of Sam Longshore and his Ark? I thought you wanted something in my line of business."

and a mouth about which there was a pucker of self-conceit.

"I did n't care to buy anything," said Jacob.

"Then what do ye want? You see, I'm a peddler. I used to drive a peddler's cart in York State; then as the railroads made trade better for the stores and worse for me, I came out here, and finally took to the river. It don't make much difference where a man is, or what he does,—it's



"I'M GOING TO GRATIFY YOUR ALIMENTIVENESS."

"What is that?" said Jacob, descending the bank.

"My line of business? Dry goods, fancy goods, tin-ware, brooms, books,—anything, from one of my patent stoves to a side-comb,—the best variety on the river; come aboard and examine. Hush your noise, Ripper!"

Ripper seemed to be the dog. At any rate, he hushed, and Jacob stepped aboard.

"If ye aint in a hurry," said Mr. Longshore, "set down on the rail there, and make yourself comfortable as ye can, while I give this fish another turn."

As he resumed his cooking, Jacob noticed that he was a man of medium height, but very spare, with a narrow, wrinkled, serious face, small eyes,

all about the same thing. My Ark aint much bigger 'n a peddler's cart, and I carry on much the same sort of trade in it, and in much the same way. Folks are about the same everywhere, and want about the same kind of truck; I know what they want, and try to furnish it."

Jacob sat down on the rail, and meekly waited for a chance to put in a word. Sam Longshore turned his fish and kept on talking.

"I go from village to village along the shores; I can go up shaller streams, where big boats can't; my boat can run where there's a good heavy dew. I'm a great reader, and a great thinker. There aint many subjects that I haint thought over and come to my own conclusions about."

And the pucker about the peddler's mouth

showed that he was confident of having come to pretty correct conclusions.

"I don't take anybody's word for anything," he went on, interrupting Jacob, who was beginning to speak. "If I hear of a book I want, I buy it, and read it, and weigh it according to my judgment, and put it by to read it again if it's worth it, or sell it to the next customer. I can always find a customer for a thing I don't want. I know just how to deal with folks. There's a monstrous sight in phrenology, and I've studied the science till I know just how to apply it to my business. I know a benevolent man, or an avaricious man, or a vain woman, or a woman of good sense and taste, the minute I set eyes on 'em, and I approach 'em accordingly. I excite the benevolent man's benevolence, and make him want to make presents to somebody of all my most valuable articles. If a man has large acquisitiveness, I let him understand that there never was such a chance for good bargains before and never will be again. Take a vain person, and I lay on a few touches of flattery here and there,—none to hurt,—and make 'em think there's nothing in the world so becoming to their style of beauty as some of my fancy articles. Then when I fall in with large causality and caution and good perceptive faculties, I comè right down to hard pan—talk plain sense, show my best goods, and tell how things are made, and interest my customers that way. There's everything in knowing what organs to excite. The last war might have been avoided just as well as not. But the trouble was, the two parties excited the wrong organs in each other. They went to fighting; and fighting always excites combativeness. Whereas they ought to have tried to excite each other's benevolence."

Weary and woe-begone as he was, Jacob was almost moved to smile at the wiry tone of voice, the quirks of the head and puckers of the mouth, with which the peddler, who was so much of a philosopher, laid down these shrewd observations and rules of life.

"Now, I know just what organs I am exciting in you," Longshore went on, pouring out a cup of coffee, buttering his fried fish, and arranging his little supper on the top of a box used as a table. "I am exciting your alimenitiveness" (learned as he was, he got some of his words wrong), "your hope, and your comparison. Your alimenitiveness—that is your desire for food—suggests to you that fried perch, fresh caught from the river, with a little salt and butter, and a cup of Sam Longshore's coffee to wash it down, would taste good.

The second organ is in a lively state, and makes you hope that I will offer you some. Your comparison—which I notice is very large—sets you to comparing me with other peddlers, my Ark with their wagons, and my ideas with common men's ideas. I'm going to gratify your alimenitiveness, and offer you one of these fish."

The philosophical peddler held out the dish to Jacob, adding, with a shrewd twinkle of the eye and a comical twist of the neck:

"Have I hit your case right?"

"I can't eat now, thank you!" said Jacob.

"Ah! then it is n't so much your alimenitiveness that is excited as your alidrinkitiveness. There is no such word in the books, but I think there ought to be one, to make the distinction between hunger and thirst. In some persons alimenitiveness is small, while alidrinkitiveness is large and active. Have a cup of coffee."

"I can't eat or drink anything," said Jacob, "until I have told you."

"Told me what?" said the philosopher, in some amazement at the failure of his science.

"I was upset in a boat up the river, along with a whole party—a boat from the steamer bound to Cincinnati—we were passengers—and one was drowned—and I stopped off, because we could n't find him, but the steamboat went on, and he was my only friend, and now I have nobody and nothing in the world!"

With which last words Jacob burst forth in a fit of violent sobbing.

The peddler who was a philosopher—the philosopher who was a peddler—became also a man.

"Why did n't you tell me? I thought, if you did n't wish to buy anything, it must be some of my supper you wanted. You ought to take something the first thing; it will fortify your stomach, and restore the loss of protoplasm, wasted by overexertion and excitement. Protoplasm is the primitive substance of all nutrition, and grief will waste it as fast as hard work."

He could not help throwing in this bit of scientific information. But he accompanied it with what was better—a cup of coffee, which he made the disheartened boy drink without more ado.

"Now tell me all about it—just the main points—and what I can do for you."

Jacob drank, and also ate a fried perch, which he held in his fingers. His body was nourished and his heart warmed. Then, getting control of his feelings enough to speak without sobbing, he told his story.

(To be continued.)

BRAVE LITTLE FLORENCIA.

(A True Story of Mexican Life.)

BY NEWTON PERKINS.

FLORENCIA TOMAYAO is a brave girl—a brave girl, and only thirteen years old. She lives in a country where there are no schools, and has not the benefit of such instruction, nor the enjoyment of such pleasant surroundings as the children of this country possess. She is an orphan, and lives with her mother in a poor little village in Mexico called Guantla-Morelos. Yet beneath her dark

hours together, while her mother hoes the corn in the field, or plows the ground, holding by the handles a great wooden plow, which is drawn across the field by one or two bullocks. Little girls in that country work as soon as they begin to walk, and they never cease working until they are dead.

Dress? Oh yes! they have dresses, but I hardly think you would like to walk with the best clad



skin she has a heart full of sympathy; and despite her surroundings and uncultivated life, she is truly a noble little girl. Do you not think from her picture that she is bright and intelligent, quick to understand, and just such a companion as you would like to have join you in a game of romps? She knows as little about playing tag and croquet as you do about minding sheep or grinding corn. Far off in Mexico the little girls are not of much consequence, the people think, and they are valued only as they can do a good day's work—draw water in buckets from a well, and carry it on their heads in earthen jars, or sit on the ground all day and turn around a large flat stone, under which the yellow maize, or Indian corn, is ground into meal. To vary the occupation, perhaps she has to carry her little baby sister or brother in her arms for

among them for half a block in our streets. They have but one garment, and that is a long cotton robe, with a hole cut in the top, by means of which they can slip it over their heads and let it fall gracefully about their bodies. When they grow up to be women, then they come out in their full attire, —in gorgeous array for holidays and *festa* days,—by adding a petticoat and a shawl folded across the breast. If they are very rich, they have ornaments of gold and silver in their hair, and perhaps wear finger-rings and necklaces.

As to their houses!—well, I hardly think a respectable goat would like to live in one of them. They are not by any means as good as a dog-kennel, and yet these peasant people sleep and eat in them. The walls are made of mud, baked hard in the sun, and the roofs are thatched with the

leaves of the yucca-tree, which are long and narrow, like a sword-blade, and have at the end a long black thorn. Sometimes the houses are made of large flat stones, built low, so that the earthquakes shall not overthrow them. There is no such thing as a floor to their houses, except the earth; nor are there any windows or chimneys. The fire is built on the ground, and of course the smoke fills the hut and blackens the walls, and a portion of it escapes at the open door. Perhaps a few of these houses have one square window cut in the wall under the roof, but without any glass in it! The family usually eat, dress and sleep in one room, as well as cook their meals and receive their friends therein; in fact, as there is but one room in the dwelling, they can do naught else. As for beds, the leaves of the yucca are plaited together, and make nice mats, which are rolled up in the day-time and at night are spread out on the floor of the hut. This is the kind of bed used in the Eastern countries, and it is very easy to "take it up and walk," as the man did whom we read about in the Bible.

Food is plentiful, and it would seem as if the more nature provides for the people, the less work they do themselves. Cattle are abundant; goats,

smoke, hunt, and too often plunder travelers. Then there is the great thick-leaved cactus-plant, bristling all over with thorns; it grows everywhere. One would think it useless; but no—it serves two most important ends. You can see long hedges of it growing in the fields, for it makes a most impenetrable barrier; no man or beast can pass over, under, or through it. Its points are like a thousand bayonets, turning down, up, sideways—every way. But the peasants cut off the leaves, put them on a stick, and hold them in the fire till the thorns are burned off, and then feed their cattle upon them.

Now, in such a country lived our little friend Florencia. She had no father, and perhaps no brothers or sisters; so as soon as she was large enough, she began to help her mother take care of the house and field. One day, when she was twelve years old, she heard a man who was gathering a crowd about him in the streets and talking to them. Drawn by curiosity, she followed him, and heard him tell of a good man who had at one time lived on the earth. She heard how this good person had been kind and forgiving to his enemies—how men had cruelly treated him, and yet he returned good for the evil he had received. She was interested; it was the first time she had heard of the Saviour, and she eagerly followed the missionary about and heard him talk to the people, until at last, from being a heathen, she became a Christian girl.

Some months after this, the incident happened which I am about to relate. At Morelos, in the province of Guantla, about five miles from the home of Florencia, was a cemetery. In that place an old custom still prevails which was practiced among the Romans hundreds of years ago,—the offering of meats and drinks to the dead. On the first of November (All Saints' Day), the people go to the graves of their dead friends, and place on them dishes full of meat, bread, fruit, and wine. They have a curious belief that this, in some way, benefits the dead. *We* know this to be a heathen custom, and consider it a nonsensical ceremony; but in the country where Florencia lived, the ignorant and superstitious people believe in it,—in truth, it is a part of their religion. On the first of November, 1875, Florencia went to the cemetery with all the other people from her neighborhood, for a great crowd had collected there. While walking through the cemetery, she saw her friend, the missionary, addressing a little band of his people, and she stopped to listen to him. He was telling them that the dead needed no offerings of meats and drinks, and that Christians did not follow such customs. It may not have been wise or generous in him to talk against their custom just at that particular time, when the people were follow-



FLORENCIA'S YUCCA-THATCHED HOME.

sheep, game and fowl are plentiful. The Indian corn grows everywhere; potatoes, yams, coffee, tobacco, barley, and the like are also cultivated. Then in other parts of Mexico are to be found the tropical fruits and plants,—oranges, figs, bananas, olives, sugar-cane, palm-trees, apples, and guava,—so that the country is rich, but the inhabitants lazy. The women do the hard work; the men

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ing it as a solemn rite ; but he was sincere, and his spirit was friendly, and his aim was to enlighten his hearers. The crowd resented, however, and even as he spoke a man near by threw a stone at him,



MEXICAN STONE HUT.

which wounded him. Then others laughed, and some bad men shouted, "Kill him ! kill him !"—and others threw more stones, till he was beaten down to the ground, wounded and bleeding. Five times the poor man arose, and as often was beaten

down again. Just then, Florencia saw a man holding a large flat stone, running to throw it upon the missionary's head, which, had it struck him, would really have killed him.

Poor little girl ! Her eyes filled with tears. She saw her good friend being stoned to death, and in a moment she rushed through the mad crowd and threw herself down upon the suffering, bleeding man, covering his head with her arms ; the big stones intended for him fell upon her and wounded her, but she clung courageously to her friend and shielded him, unmindful of her own danger, and caring only to save his life. In vain did they try to pull her away ; she held on with all her strength, and cried for help. In a few moments help came ; for the *gens d'armes* drove the assailants away, and took the missionary and little Florencia, both bleeding and sore, to the house of friends, where they were carefully nursed. But for this noble act of self-sacrifice, the man would have been killed. The bravery of this little peasant girl alone saved him. She sympathized with his suffering, and dared to help him at the risk of her own life. Noble impulses of the heart do not always attend on fine faces and gentle living. Many a girl would have run, screaming with fright, from such a scene as that in the cemetery of Guantla-Morelos. But such bravery in a child gives promise of greater things when she becomes a woman ; and in the noble Florencia we look for a kind-hearted, generous, self-sacrificing woman, who, under proper influences, will do great good among her country-people. She is now only fourteen, and is being educated in a Protestant school in Mexico, away from her wild home, and is growing daily in favor with her teachers.

MARCH.

BY M. M. H. CONWAY.

AH, surly March ! you've come again,
With sleet and snow, and hail and rain ;
Cold earth beneath, dark sky above you,
What have you, pray, to make us love you ?
No month is half so rough as you,
December winds less harshly blew ;
What churlish ways ! what storm-tossed tresses !
Your presence every one distresses !
Haste, haste away ! We longing wait
To greet fair April at our gate.
Cold earth beneath, dark sky above you,
Surely you've naught to make us love you !

" Ah, see these blossoms ! " he replied,
Tossing his hail-torn cloak aside,—
" Though other months have flowers a-many,
Say, are not mine as fair as any ?
See, peeping from each dusky fold,
The crocus with its cup of gold ;
Violets, snowdrops white and stilly,
Sweeter than any summer lily ;
And underneath the old oak-leaves,—
Her fragrant wreath the arbutus weaves,—
Whatever sky may be above me,
Surely for *these* all hearts will love me ! "

THE STARS IN MARCH.

BY RICHARD A. PROCTOR.

URSA MAJOR is now swinging round toward the highest part of his course above the pole. It is his forepaw that you see, marked by the letters θ , κ , and ι , very nearly above the pole; while α and β are the "pointers" whose motion has been already described.

The Little Bear is nearly in a horizontal position, and, according to my promise last month, I proceed to give a short account of this small but most interesting constellation. I do not think that the Little Bear, like the larger one, was so named because of any imagined resemblance to a bear. The original constellation of the Great Bear was much older than the Little Bear, and so many different nations agreed in comparing the group to a bear, that there



THE LITTLE BEAR.

must have been a real resemblance to that animal in the constellation as first figured. Later, when star-maps came to be arranged by astronomers who had never seen bears, they supposed the three bright stars forming the handle of the Dipper to represent the tail of the bear, though the bear is not a long-tailed animal. They thus set three stars for the bear's tail, and the quadrangle of stars forming the dipper itself for the bear's body. This done, it was natural enough that, seeing in the group of stars now forming the Little Bear the three stars α , δ , and ϵ on one side, and the quadrangle formed by the stars ζ , η , β , and γ on the other, they should call this group the Little Bear, assigning the three stars to his tail and the quadrangle to his body. Thus did the constellation of the Little Bear probably take its rise. It was not formed by fanciful folks in the childhood of the world, but by astronomers. Yet it must not be imagined that the constellation is a modern one. It not only belongs to old Ptolemy's list, but is mentioned by Aratus, who borrowed his astronomy from Eudoxus, who "flourished" (as the school-

books call it) about 360 years before the Christian era. It is said that Thales formed the constellation, in which case it must have reached the respectable age of about 2500 years. It is usually pictured as shown in Fig. 1, and a very remarkable animal it is.

But if the Little Bear is not a very fine animal, it is a most useful constellation. From the time when the Phoenicians were as celebrated merchant seamen as the Venetians afterward became, and as the English-speaking nations now are, this star-group has been the cynosure of every sailor's regard. In fact, the word "cynosure" was originally a name given either to the whole of this constellation or to a part of it. Cynosure has become quite a poetical expression in our time, but it means literally "the dog's tail;" and either the curved row of stars α , δ , ϵ , ζ , and β was compared to a dog's tail, or else the curved row of stars 4 , 5 , β , and γ . I incline, for my own part, to think these last formed the true cynosure—for this reason simply, that when the constellation was first formed these stars were nearer the pole than was our present pole-star. Even in the time of Ptolemy, the star β was nearer the pole than α , and was called in consequence by the agreeable name Al-Kaukab-al-shemali, which signifies "the northern star." (For the reason why the fixed stars thus changed in position with regard to the pole of the heavens, I must refer you to books on astronomy, and perhaps to a later paper. I only note here that the star-sphere remains the same all the time; but the earth, which is whirling on its axis like a mighty top, is also *reeling* like a top, and just as the axis of a top is swayed now east now west, now north now south, so does the axis of the earth vary in position as she reels. I may add that the reeling motion is somewhat slower than the whirling motion. The earth whirls once on her axis in a day, but she only reels round once in 25,868 years.)

Admiral Smyth gives some interesting particulars about the two stars β and γ , called the "guardians of the pole." "Recorde tells us," he says, "in the 'Castle of Knowledge,' nearly three hundred years ago, that navigators used two pointers in Ursa—'which many do call the Shaste, and others do name the Guardas, after the Spanish tongue.' Richard Eden, in 1584, published his 'Arte of Navigation,' and therein gave rules for the 'starres,' among which are special directions for the two called the guards, in the mouth of the

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'horne,' as the figure was called." (The pole-star would mark the small end of the horne.) "In the 'Safeguard of Saylers' (1619) are detailed rules for finding the hour of the night by the 'guardes.' " "How often," says Hervey in his "Meditations," "have these stars beamed bright intelligence on the sailor and conducted the keel to its destined haven!"

The constellation Cepheus is now about to pass below the pole. The royal father of Andromeda is presented in a somewhat unkingly attitude at present—standing, to wit, upon his royal head. In any case, the constellation is not very like a crowned king. The stars ζ , ϵ , and δ form his head. (A London cockney might find an aid to the memory by noting that these letters α , ϵ , and δ spell, after

a remarkable change has taken place since last month. Orion has passed over toward the southwest, whither the Greater Dog is following him; and where Orion stood in full glory last month, there is now a singularly barren region. Not only are no stars of the first four magnitudes visible between Hydra and the Milky Way, but over a large portion of this space there is not a single star visible to the naked eye; insomuch that an ingenious Frenchman named M. Rabache was led to suppose that there is here a monstrous dark body millions of times larger than the sun, and hiding from view stars which really lie in this direction. He even went so far as to assert that when the sky was very clear he had discerned the circular outline



THE CONSTELLATION OF THE GREAT SHIP.

a sort, "iz 'ed;" but I think young folks in America can hardly imagine the utter demoralization of cockney aspirates.) The constellation Cepheus was probably simply fitted in, that the history of the sacrifice and rescue of Andromeda might be complete; we have Cepheus and Cassiopeia, her father and mother, on one side, and, as will be seen later, Andromeda herself, and her rescuer, Perseus, on the other. But of all the figures, Cassiopeia alone seems suggested by the stars themselves; or rather a chair is suggested, and imagination readily suggested a lady seated therein. Why Cassiopeia rather than any other lady from Eve downward, is not apparent.

Turning to the southern heavens, we find that

of this great body,—the center, he said, round which all the stars are traveling. But unfortunately for our faith in this little story, the telescope shows multitudes of small stars scattered over the whole of this region.

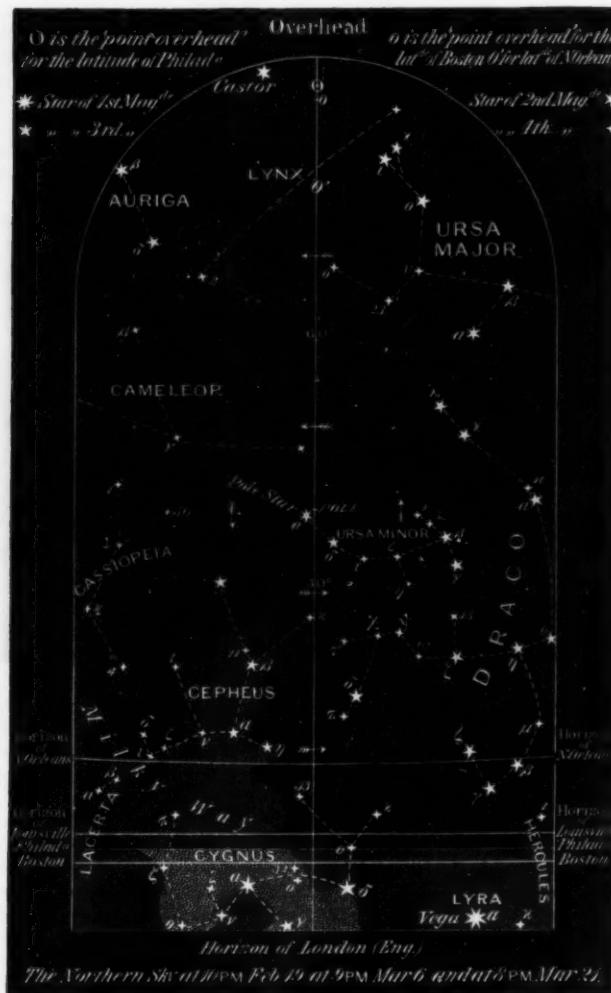
The constellation Argo, or the Great Ship, now occupies the region immediately above the southern horizon. This constellation is not at all well seen in England, or even (as you can see from the way in which the horizon line of the latitude of Philadelphia divides it) in the greater part of the United States. Only when the latitude of New Orleans is approached, does the keel of the ship, and the bright star Canopus in the rudder (or guiding oar), show out well above the horizon. But, to say the

* I heard of a similar case not a hundred miles from Louisville, closer to the sun than Mercury, and who had somehow calculated that such a planet supposed to have been seen by a Frenchman named Lescarbault in March, 1859, would pass across the sun's face in a certain September, succeeded in seeing it there. Subsequent calculation showed, unfortunately, that the planet, if it exists at all, would indeed have then lain in the same direction as the sun, but beyond him, not on this side of him! An old proverb says that certain persons should have good memories: it is at least equally true that one who proposes to invent an observation should be a correct computer.

A philosopher whose theories required that a planet should travel closer to the sun than Mercury, and who had somehow calculated that such a planet supposed to have been seen by a Frenchman named Lescarbault in March, 1859, would pass across the sun's face in a certain September, succeeded in seeing it there. Subsequent calculation showed, unfortunately, that the planet, if it exists at all, would indeed have then lain in the same direction as the sun, but beyond him, not on this side of him! An old proverb says that certain persons should have good memories: it is at least equally true that one who proposes to invent an observation should be a correct computer.

truth, this fine celestial ship nowhere presents in these days the ship-shape appearance which it had some three thousand years ago. The same cause which has shifted the position of the poles of the heavens, has tilted Argo up by the stern, until she resembles rather one half of a vessel which has

pushed, to place the constellation as it now appears above the southern horizon. I believe that in reality the old constellation, besides being better placed, was much larger than the present. The fine group of clustering stars now covering the Dove and the hind-quarters of the Dog, belonged,



been broken on a ridge of rocks, than as she was formerly described, "the stern half of a vessel drawn poop foremost into harbor." I have drawn her in Fig. 2 as she was placed three thousand years ago. You have only to tilt the picture sideways a little, until Sirius on the dog's nose is above Cano-

I think, to the stern of Argo. In fact, these stars form the well-marked outline of one of the old-fashioned lofty poops. The Dove, by the way, is a well-placed little constellation; but the Dog prancing just behind the stern of Argo forms an altogether incongruous element in the picture.

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The constellation Argo is divided. We have Puppis, the poop or stern; Malus, the mast; Vela, the sails; and Carina, the keel. Not to confuse the map with many lines, I have not shown the limits of these parts. In fact, they can only be properly shown in a regular star-atlas. (In Map V.

Argus, but the stars close by marked κ , and η , would be called κ Puppis and η Puppis, and so on.

The part of the Milky Way occupied by Argo is remarkable for its singularly complex shape. It is well to notice how incorrect is the ordinary description of the Milky Way as a zone of cloudy star-



of my pocket-atlas for schools these subdivisions are shown.) Only it is to be noticed that while the Greek letters refer to the whole ship, the italic and Roman letters refer to the various parts. Thus the stars marked ρ and ζ (on the summit of the stern) would be called respectively ρ Argus and

light circling the entire heavens. Here you see it spreading out into a great fan-shaped expansion, separated from a somewhat similar one by a wide dark space.

Above the equator, two zodiacal constellations are seen,—the fine constellation Gemini, or the

Twins, and the poor one Cancer, or the Crab. Cancer used to be the sign in which the sun attained his greatest elevation in summer, or rather it was as he entered this sign that he was at his highest. But you see from the map that all the way through the part of Gemini shown, and onward through Cancer, the sun's course is down-hill,—or, in other words, it is after midsummer that he traverses these constellations. The sign ♊ marks the beginning of the zodiacal sign of the Lion.

The constellation Gemini no doubt derived its name from the two bright stars, nearly equal in luster, Castor and Pollux. Of these, Castor was formerly the brighter, but now Pollux is brighter, nearly in the proportion of four to three. Formerly this star-group was represented by a pair of kids; but the Greeks substituted twin-children with their feet resting on the Milky Way. The Arabian astronomers, in their turn, changed the twins to peacocks; and the astronomers of the middle ages pictured the twins as two winged angels. It would be difficult to say whether the group reminds one more (or less) of kids, or twins, or peacocks, or angels.

Gemini is said by astrologers to be the sign specially ruling over London, though why this should be so they do not tell us. We can understand why sailors should regard the sign as propitious to them, for when the sun is in Gemini the seas are usually calm,—at least summer is more pleasant for sailors than winter. You will remem-

ber that the ship in which Paul sailed from Malta had for its sign the twin brothers, Castor and Pollux.

As the Twins pass over toward the west, hour by hour, or night by night at the same hour, they come into the position described by Tennyson, where he sings of

"a time of year
When the face of night is fair* on the dewy downs,
And the shining daffodil dies, and the Chariot
And starry Gemini hang like glorious crowns
Over Orion's grave low down in the west."

Cancer is a very poor constellation to the eye, but full of interest to the telescopist. Even with a very small telescope, the little cluster called Praesépe, or the Bee-hive, is found to be full of stars. Galileo, whose best telescope was but a poor one, counted thirty-eight stars in this cluster, which to the naked eye looks like a mere fleck of faintly luminous cloud.

The weather-wise of old times regarded Praesépe with peculiar interest. When it was clearly visible they expected fine dry weather, while its gradual disappearance as the air thickened with moisture was regarded as a sign of approaching rain. On the whole, however, I think the Weather Probabilities more trustworthy than this and similar prognostics.

Next month, Hydra, the Sea-serpent, will have come fairly above the southern horizon, and will deservedly claim our attention.

* This description is truer for European than for American nights, for the pleasant nights of spring come later in America than with us.



SPRING WORK.

Drawn by Mary A. Lathbury.

PATTIKIN'S HOUSE.

BY JOY ALLISON.

CHAPTER IV.

MAKING CANDY.

THE minister said: "Now for the molasses candy. Bring the jug,—Seth, Sammy, Sandy,—some of you!"

The jug was brought with alacrity, and a full quart of molasses poured into the skillet.

Thirza and Tilda had the dishes to wash, and they wished very much that they were done, so they could sit round the stove with the rest, and watch the boiling of the molasses; and Tiny-toes had to rock the cradle, but only for a little while, till her mother was ready to sit down to her sewing, and then she would jog it with her foot.

"Let's never mind to wash the big pudding-dish," whispered Tilda to Thirza. "It's heavy and hateful to do, and we can push it under the sink-board and let it be till morning."

"I wont be a shirk," said Thirza. "Besides, it may be wanted for the candy."

Then Tilda was ashamed, and her cheeks grew hot, because she had been willing to be a shirk; and she wiped the heavy dish in silence, and put it away.

The molasses had but just begun to boil when the last dish-towel was rinsed and hung up, and the neatly wiped sink closed for the night.

"Better butter the dish before you sit down, girls," said their father. "Then it will be all ready when we want to pour out the candy."

"What dish shall you want?" asked Thirza.

"The large pudding-dish," said the mother; and Tilda's cheeks got hot again. They had a way of reddening at the slightest provocation. She was glad now that the dish had not been pushed under the sink-board. When it was well buttered, they sat down with the rest, to watch the boiling of the molasses.

"How shall you know when it is done, when you have n't any snow to try it on?" asked Thirza.

"Oh, I can tell!" said the minister.

"How?" persisted Pattikin.

"By experience," said her father.

The big word daunted Patty for a minute, and she pondered what it might mean.

"Does anybody have any 'cept ministers?" she asked by and by.

"Any what, Pattikin?"

"Sperence," said Patty, gravely.

"Ha, ha, ha!" laughed the minister. "Why,

yes, child! Experience is what we learn by trying. I have learned by trying, so that I can tell pretty well when the candy is done."

"Oh!" said Pattikin.

By and by, the candy bubbled clear up to the top of the skillet, and the minister had to take it off the fire and hold it up, and let it cool a little, or it would have boiled over.

"I guess it's 'most done. Get a saucer and a spoon, Sandy, and we will try it," said he.

It was tasted, and worked with the spoon, and the children all judged it done; but their father said, "No, it needs another ten minutes."

At last, he took it off and tried it again, and tasted it, and whopped it over and over with the spoon, and said, "DONE!"

Then he took it to the table, where the pudding-dish stood ready, and poured it out,—the children clustering about like bees to watch every movement.

"Will it take long to cool?" asked Pattikin.

"Very long, if we stand by and watch it. That is, it will seem very long. We will set it by the open window in my study, and then come back here and each tell a story, and by the time we get round the circle it will be cool."

"Well, you begin," said Pattikin, who liked her father's stories.

"No, we will let the youngest begin, and go on up to the oldest."

"I can't think of any," said Pattikin.

"Tell something. It need n't be very long," said her father.

"Once, last winter," began Patty, "you let me go to the post-office. It was a pretty cold day, and before I got there I wished I had n't started. But, coming home, I came across a sleigh, and the man stopped his horse and said, 'Hop in, little girl. You can ride home just as well as not.' So I hopped in, pretty glad. And he said, 'You are the minister's little one, aint you?' I don't know how he knew, for I did n't know him; but I said, 'Yes, sir.' Then he said, 'It must take a lot o' fodder to keep such a flock of boys and girls as there is at your house.' I said, 'We don't eat fodder—we eat bread;' and he laughed. And then, in a minute, we stopped at the door; and he pulled out a codfish from under the buffalo, and said, 'You give that to your pa, if he wants it; and if he don't want it, you can have it to slide down hill on.' And I hoped awf'ly that you

would n't want it, 'cause it would 'a' been just big enough for me to slide on; but you said, 'Of course, and much obliged to him,'—and that's all I can tell."

"And so you lost your slide?" said her father, laughing. "Well, Sandy, it's your turn now."

"There did n't nothing ever happened to me," said Sandy.

"Tell how you planted the chenangoes last spring," suggested Seth.

"Half a peck in a hill, and then went off a-fishin'," said Sandy.

"Ho! that aint the way to tell it!" said Pattikin. "Can't you make a story of it?"

"We shall have to let Sandy go, and give him up as an incorrigible," said the minister. "We might as well try to get a story out of the old gobbler as out of him. Tilda, you can tell one."

"When I was a little girl," said Tilda —

"What are you now?" asked Samuel, mischievously.

"Hush, Sammy! You must n't interrupt," said his mother.

Tilda began again.

"Last summer, Mr. Iturbide's folks had company; and it was Mehitable's cousin from Boston, and her name was Ida Ella Fonsa Iturbide. I thought that was a very fine name. Well, one day, mother let me go over to see Hitty and Ida. I carried my rag-baby, and Hitty had hers; but Ida had a real doll, with red cheeks and curly hair, and she made fun of ours, and said they had n't any noses, and all such things. We did n't like it, Hitty and I, though we did n't say much, because Ida was a city girl, and Hitty's company. By and by we went out into the barn, and we laid our babies down on a little bed that we made in the hay. When we came back for them, Prince (the puppy, you know) was lying beside them, and he had chewed up one of Ida's dolly's arms, and the sawdust was all coming out; and he had licked some of the paint off its face too. You never saw such a mad girl as Ida was. She wanted to whip Prince with a big stick, but we would n't let her. The school-mistress covered the arm over new, and painted the dolly's cheek. Only it did n't look so nice as it did before. And that's all."

Here the minister got up and went to look at the candy.

"As true as I live, it's cool already!" said he. "We shall have to hear the rest of the stories another time."

"Shall we all have some to pull?" asked Tilda.

"Every one that can show a clean pair of hands."

The wash-bowl and the soap and the towels were in great demand then, and such faithful scrubbing

was n't done every day by the minister's children. One pair of hands after another was presented for inspection, approved, and, after being buttered, received a portion of the candy to pull.

And such glee as there was, as they walked the kitchen, working the candy. The minister's did n't stick a bit, and such handsome yellow strands as he would draw out! But the rest did not succeed so well.

"Mine gets all stucked on to my fingers," said Pattikin.

"Keep farther from the fire, and put on more butter," said her father.

Pattikin kept out in the corner after that. She worked like a little hero, but the more she worked the worse it would stick. At last, the minister heard a sound like a little sob, and looking round, there was Patty in the farthest and darkest corner of the room, with her face toward the wall, her ten little fingers stuck together by a hopelessly dark, dauby-looking mass, and her tears falling right down on it.

"The hateful stuff! I did n't think it would acted so!" said she, when her father came to her.

"Why, Pattikin! Come out here and let me clean you up. You shall have some of mine to eat, and yours can go to the piggy. Of course he'll want some," said the minister.

"I'll do it, father, if you'll finish mine," said Sandy. "It don't do so well in my hands as it does in yours."

So Sandy took a knife and carefully released his little sister's fingers, and then washed them and wiped away her tears, and by that time the candy was worked enough.

Thirza brought the molding-board, and then the father twisted out the sticks, while Seth cut them off and laid them straight on the board to get hard.

"Another knife-handle came off to-day," said the mother.

"Another! Our supply must be getting short!" said the minister.

"Only three left!" said his wife.

The minister drew a little breath through his lips as if he were about to whistle. But he did n't. He said:

"I shall have to attend to that business."

"We all have to eat with knives that have lost their handles but Seth," said Thirza, with an injured air.

"They would n't have come off so soon if you had been more careful about putting them into hot water," said her mother.

"Bring out all the broken pewter spoons there are. I'll see what I can do," said her father.

Thirza found six.

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"Now that old teapot with the bottom melted," said he.

Then he opened the front doors of the stove. There was a splendid bed of glowing coals, and he put a part of his old pewter into the fire-shovel and set it on the coals to melt. Then he got the handleless knives and wound some strong, thick, brown paper into a little smooth, straight, hollow

And three more verses. Only Pattikin did n't sing after the first verse, because she fell to wondering who "Mary Turn" was, and what she had done that was so bad. She was thinking so earnestly that she nearly forgot to kneel down at prayers.

May be you'll think they went to bed without a taste of that candy. No, indeed! They had been eating it all along, as they worked it and as it was



SANDY TO THE RESCUE!

handle, and tied it on. He had sprinkled some fine powder all over the bit of iron to which the handle had been fastened. Then, when the lead was melted in the shovel, he very carefully poured the hollow paper full, and set it aside to cool. To keep it in an upright position, he stuck it in a crack in the floor of the back kitchen.

"Now, when that gets hard, we'll take off the paper and see if it is worth while to try another," said he.

"It's been time the youngest ones were abed this hour," said the mother.

So they all sat around the fire and sang:

"Life is the time to serve the Lord,
The time to insure the great reward:
And while the lamp holds out to burn,
The vilest sinner may return."

cut up, till they really did n't care for another bit that night. Only I forgot to say so before.

CHAPTER V.

AUNT SARAH'S VISIT.

In the morning, the knife was taken out of the crack in the back-room floor, and the brown paper taken off, and there appeared a beautifully round, smooth handle, as white and shining as silver. It was a little heavy, to be sure, but on the whole the minister was so well pleased with the success of his experiment, that he put on the other six that day, before he started for the Association, and left them in the crack to cool while he was gone, or till they should be wanted.

"Will hot water hurt these?" asked Thirza one

day, while they were yet a new thing, examining them with great satisfaction.

"Never a bit!" said the minister; and then remembering his dignity, "Not at all, my dear. Those are good, I think, for the next fifty years."

I must pass by the digging of the potatoes,—though, you may be sure, they made something interesting of the job; and the stone-picking, and the corn-husking.

I think the next thing that happened out of the ordinary course of events was Aunt Sarah's visit. She came about Thanksgiving time. The first snow came that same afternoon, and the big yellow stage-coach, the veiled and fur-clad passengers, were all seen through a mist of fine feathery flakes. Aunt Sarah had to alight into the soft fleece, but three or four brooms were quickly engaged sweeping a broad path for her to walk to the house.

They almost forgot their joy at the coming of the snow for an hour after her arrival. But they soon were tired of sitting quietly and watching the new-comer, and she was too cold and numb, after her long ride, to talk much; so they presently stole out, one by one, to revel again in the new delight. They held up their hands to catch the falling flakes. They made unnecessary paths in all directions, which were filled up in an hour. They pelted one another with snow-balls, and even began a snow man, which they had to leave at the knees, because supper was ready.

After supper, they got off shoes and stockings, as they always did, unless it was very cold indeed, and their mother forbade it; and a whispering began at Tilda, and passed round the circle to all but Pattikin (who was in Aunt Sarah's lap) and the baby in his cradle, and shortly after they were all missing, and down the hill they went, their white feet flying through the whiter, softer snow, ankle deep already, and their gleeful shouts rousing Mrs. Vesta from her first snooze, and causing her to wonder what had got into the little Joneses now.

Aunt Sarah was horrified when they came back into the kitchen, two minutes after, rosy and panting, and huddling about the fire to dry their glowing feet. She had been living in the city, where the children were like flowers grown in a hot-house, and she had no idea of such sturdy "olive-plants." But their mother took it very quietly, for she was used to their pranks and never needlessly frightened.

"You will slide down-hill on my sled some day, Aunt Sarah, won't you—when there is snow enough for good sliding?" asked Seth.

"I? Why, it's been twenty years since I've been out sliding down-hill!" said Aunt Sarah.

"So much the more reason why you should do it now, then!" said the minister.

Seth being thus encouraged by his father, and assisted also by the importunities of Sammy, Simon, and Sandy, prevailed upon his aunt to give a promise.

But they had to wait a good while. One light, soft snow fell after another. There was plenty of breaking roads, shoveling paths, and merry sleigh-riding to school, but the wind would not make drifts, nor would the sun melt the snow enough to allow the formation of a crust. They made the path from the front door to the road broad and smooth, and did some sliding down the slope. But this was not their sliding-place.

Over west of the frog-pond was a long, not too steep slope. Then a short, level stretch, and then an abrupt fall of the land as in a terrace, and this brought them to the edge of the pond. The impetus of that last leap sent them clear across the ice to the farther side. With such a glorious place as this, no wonder they looked scornfully upon the gentle declivity in front of the house. There was one thing, however, which redeemed it, and gave it some zest. This was the fact that the least inadvertence in steering down that narrow path brought them up in a snow bed at once.

As the time of Aunt Sarah's visit was drawing to a close, the boys concluded it must be the slope or nothing; and she being more willing to take the risk of being plunged into the snow here, than to face the dangers of the "flying leap," favored the idea of taking her ride at once. She had insisted that it should come off in the evening. She "was not going to make a spectacle of herself by broad daylight."

So, one moonlight night, they led Aunt Sarah out for her promised slide. She looked at the long, narrow, frail-looking structure they called "the sled," and said:

"You go down once first, while I stand here and watch you. Two or three of you pile on at once. I want to be sure the thing won't break down under me."

"Why, Aunt Sarah! It's as strong as iron. We've all of us been on it at once!" said Seth. "Well, come on then, boys. Let's go down once, and let aunty see if it is n't fine fun."

They were ready,—more than "two or three" of them,—and in a minute the sled was loaded and went gliding swiftly down the slope, and away across the road, where the load resolved itself into separate youngsters, who came trooping back behind the sled.

There was no excuse for delay, so Aunt Sarah took her place, behind Seth, on the sled. Just as they were starting off, the minister himself came out.

"Now steer carefully, Seth! Remember, you've got valuable freight on board," said he.

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"Yes, sir!" replied Seth, and they went down. Smoothly, gracefully, not too swiftly, they glided on till they reached the place where the sled had stopped before; and Aunt Sarah, pleased to find herself right side up and in good order, walked smilingly back up the hill.

"I believe I'll try it myself," said the minister. "Sarah, we used to slide down-hill together,—suppose we try it now."

She had gained so much confidence by her first success, that she made little objection to trying again, especially with her brother. Doubtless, if Seth could steer so well, his father could do still better. So the robes were tucked up again, and off they went.

But somehow—not even the minister knew how—the sled slewed to one side, and instantly they found themselves floundering in deep snow outside the path. There was a great shout of laughter from the irreverent youngsters at the top of the hill.

"Did you do that on purpose, John?" the victim asked reproachfully, as she got up and shook her garments and stamped off the snow.

"No, really, Sarah!" said the minister, laughing, but mortified. "It takes more practice than I supposed to steer a sled like this down such a narrow path."

Aunt Sarah would go in then. She had had enough of sliding, she said,—should n't get over the twist her neck got for a week, she dared say. So she and her brother went in, and the children stayed to have their good time out.

She went away two days after—back to her city home. She could n't stay any longer, because it was almost Christmas, and Uncle Ralph's family, where she made her home, made much account of Christmas. The minister's family did not. It

had not yet become the fashion up among the New England hills; and they were in no hurry to introduce it, because where the families were very large it might be doubtful whether old Santa Claus could fill all the stockings. They were thankful, for their part, to be able to furnish the stockings themselves at present.

They had a fire in the best room the afternoon before Aunt Sarah went. The minister's wife had made a plum-cake, and they got out the strawberry preserves, and made a grand supper in her honor, with the best dishes and all. Nobody was there but the home circle, of course, but that was "a party" any time and all the time. And it pleased Aunt Sarah better than if they could have had a grand ball.

After it was over, they all went back to the best room, and sat round the fire, talking, except the girls, who staid in the kitchen to wash the dishes.

Tilda and Pattikin almost quarreled over a bit of cake that had been left on the table. Their judgment in discerning a hair-breadth of difference in the size of the two pieces into which they had cut it was really surprising; and when it was settled between them at last, it dawned upon their greedy little minds that Thirza ought also to have a share in the leavings.

"Here! we've left none for Thirza! We must each give her a piece of ours!" said Tilda, preparing to divide hers.

"I don't want any cake that's had to be fought about," said Thirza, scornfully.

Tilda's cheeks grew hot, and her cake seemed to choke her; but Pattikin coolly swallowed hers, and then retreated to the parlor, as if her share of the clearing-up was done. And I suppose it was, for she was such a little girl.

(To be continued.)

POOR KATY DELAY.

BY MARIA W. JONES.

With cheeks like pink roses abloom in May,
And eyes like the stars, so sparkling were
they!

With breath like sweet clover, or new-mown

hay,

Ah! pretty and sweet was Katy Delay.
And good and wise we should find her this
day,

Had it not been for a very bad way
She had, whenever her mother would say,
"Come, Katy, and learn!" of crying, "I'll stay

Just five minutes more!" or "Dear mother, pray
Wait till to-morrow,—I want so to play!"

Now she is old and wrinkled and gray.
And knows no more than they do at Cathay,—
Foolish and old, and never a ray
Of comfort for her who once was so gay;
And all because she would have her own way.
Somehow or other, 't is always *to-day*;
She never has found, I'll venture to say,
Any to-morrow. Poor Katy Delay!

"MISS MUFFETT" SERIES—No. VII.



LITTLE TRADJA of Norway,
She sat in the door-way,
Eating her reindeer broth;

There came a big badger,
And little Miss Tradja
Soon carried her meal further north.

THE SICK FROG.

HAVE you ever seen a green frog which was fed on nothing but pennies? Marie had one. It was made of iron, and painted green, with large black eyes, and it was to be used as a savings bank. It was a curious-looking frog, with its green speckled back; and when Marie pressed her finger on its left foot, it opened its mouth wide. Then she dropped a penny in the mouth, and let go of the foot. What do you think froggy did? He shut up his mouth, swallowed the pennies, and winked his two black eyes,

as if to say, "That's good—give me another!" It was such fun to feed the frog and see him wink!

But one day poor froggy was sick. He would not eat nor roll his eyes. Marie did n't know what to do. She shook him till he must have been dizzy. She turned him upside down, she pounded him, but it was all of no avail,—froggy would not move his mouth or eyes. At last she took him to mamma.

"Mamma, dear, froggy will not eat any more!"

"Too bad, indeed!" said mamma. "Let me see what is the matter."

So she looked in the frog's mouth, just as a doctor looks at little girls' tongues when they are ill and cannot eat.

"Why, what is this I see?" said mamma. "Bring me my scissors."

Marie brought the long shears, and mamma thrust them into the frog's mouth, and soon brought out a piece of slate pencil.

"Why, no wonder poor froggy was sick! Now, don't ever put anything in his mouth, my little girl, except pennies, and he will be all right."



Just then the frog gave a wink with both eyes, as he always did when he was well, and little Marie was happy.

"Oh, you good frog!" said she. "Now you shall have a real nice dinner," and she dropped a silver ten-cent piece into his mouth, which he quickly swallowed, seeming to say, by his winks, "I'm all right now."



JACK-IN-THE-PULPIT.

How d'ye do, my chicks?

Spring is close at hand, they say; but, if so, she has forgotten to bring her weather. May be it is to be sent after her by express—who knows?

Meantime, here is something that will interest you.

CRYSTALLIZED HORSES.

REAL, live horses encrusted with crystal! Most of my children would think that could not be a possible thing, I suppose; but I have some boys and girls away off in British America, or even in Minnesota, or Iowa, or Dakota, who could tell you that it is possible, for they have seen it.

In these places, as in other cold countries, a horse when resting after a rapid drive in the frosty atmosphere will be found covered with ice-crystals. It is the moisture from his body and his breath which has frozen upon him, forming beautiful little ice-crystals over his whole form. In this condition he looks like an immense toy horse covered with sugar.

Who among you have seen this thing "with your own eyes?"

A FRESH-WATER WHALE.

YOU must know that as the white whale in the great New York Aquarium is at present the only captive whale on earth, he is, of course, a great pet, and always has the best of treatment. He has two bushels of live eels daily, and until the icy winter interfered, he had his enormous tank kept constantly filled with frequent supplies of salt sea-water. Of late, this has been so hard to obtain, that he has had to depend on Croton. Yes, for many weeks this great sea-king has been living entirely on fresh water! There's a let-down for a respectable whale! I suppose he considers himself in a very decided pickle, though it may strike us

differently. And how strange he must feel—the great, heavy, floundering, flapping thing—in water so much lighter than he has been accustomed to, to say nothing of its want of flavor! Still he thrives, and gulps down his two bushels of live eels with great relish. Long may he prosper!

Later.—By Telegraph.—Bad news! The great white whale is no more! He has gone to still fresher waters. He died suddenly on January 27th, while the music was playing and crowds of unsuspecting visitors were looking on, wondering at his unusual liveliness.

SCHOOL LUNCHEONS.

DEAR JACK: Will you allow me to say a few words to your young folks on the matter of school luncheons? (Yes, indeed, Jack will!) I have noticed that new scholars coming to the red school-house, usually, until they fall into the ways of established pupils, bring for their noon luncheon cakes, pies, and even candies. One day a little girl actually brought a pop-corn ball, a whole box of guava jelly and a pickle! Such things, you'll admit, form very improper nourishment for growing children to depend upon daily from 8 A. M. till 4 P. M., and boys and girls cannot be too warmly advised against their use. Fruit in its season, apples and oranges at any time, good bread and butter, meat sandwiches—these always are safe and wholesome. But it occurs to me that there may be many other things equally good, and that the young people can help each other to find them out. Therefore, with this in view, and also in the hope of partially ascertaining the extent of the evil to which I have alluded, I have a request to make of one and all:

Will you not, dear girls and boys, each write a letter telling me what you ordinarily take to school for your noon feeding? Tell me of the luncheons you like best, and which you oftenest obtain. Don't write out an ideal lunch, naming the things that you would have, if you could, when in your most enlightened state. Tell me what you actually take. If it be molasses candy and pickles, say so. If it be mince-pie and sausages, or plain apples and crackers, tell me frankly. Consider yourself in the light of workers for the public good, and let the whole truth come out.

A good Boston school lately took occasion in its annual catalogue to say that its pupils suffer more from want of nourishing food than from all other matters combined that come into the school-hours. They add: "It is of little use to arrange for varied lessons, frequent change of position, softened light, proper attitude, and pure air, if health is constantly undermined by inattention to food."

Do you not see that it is time for school-girls and school-boys to take the matter into serious consideration? Talk it over with your parents, young friends, and beg them to have fortitude to withstand you when you coax them for meringues and mince-pies!

Who knows what may be the result of this

"movement,"—what dainty, excellent things may come into general adoption among you school-children; what sallow, blotted faces may be cleared up; what headaches may be driven away; what rosy cheeks brought into bloom; what school-triumphs may follow! *All write*, little and big! Address, "The Little Schoolma'am, care of Scribner & Co., 743 Broadway, New York." Write only on one side of the paper; give your full name and address ("confidentially," if you prefer it), and, above all, let straightforward, simple fact-telling be the order of the day.

Now, dear Jack, if the boys and girls respond to my request, I shall indeed be

Your happy
LITTLE SCHOOLMA'AM.

A REAL BABY-HOUSE.

Talbot County, near Easton, Md.
DEAR JACK-IN-THE-PULPIT: I am going to tell you about our baby-house, because it is built out-of-doors, and some of the dear Little Schoolma'am's girls may like to make one of the same kind. It is built of rough little pine-logs. It has pine-rushes on the roof to keep the rain out, for you know, pine rushes shed water. Our house is very dark inside, for it has no windows except a pane of glass in the door. The door is very narrow, and I have to go in sideways, as I am rather fat. We have a stove in our house; it is the upper part of an old hall-stove, but it cooks very nicely on top. There is no place to bake. We cook coffee, tea, chocolate, toast bread, stew taffy, and boil eggs there. Our stove is very warm, and it lights up the room nicely when there is a good fire in it. We have also a little cart and an old horse; her name is "Dolly." She is old, and has a swelled leg. Mother would not sell her to any one, but gave her to us, on condition that we would be very kind and gentle to her. We haul rushes from the woods for the roof and for chinking up our house, and wood for our stove. We go out in our cart whenever we want to, for Dolly is very easy to catch, and she is very willing to help us. Alice puts her to. (Alice is my sister; she will be eleven years old to-morrow.) We have not fixed the floor of our house yet, but it is to be of boards, with pine rushes on top for a carpet. I am fourteen and a half years old. I inclose a



picture, which I drew myself. I hope it is good enough for you to show to my St. NICHOLAS cousins. The door of a new one ought to be much larger, so that escape would be easy in case of fire. But we are *very* careful.—Yours truly,

MINNIE.

'A SEED IN THE WOOL.'

A LITTLE bird told me lately of a tiny flower which appeared, a few years ago, along the railroads in the Southern States. It suddenly and completely carpeted the ground.

The Little Schoolma'am says that it is called *Acanthospermum*,—she delights in using a large part of the alphabet in one word, you know. It is a

South American plant; and how do you think it happened to be traveling by railroad?

The seeds are supposed to have been introduced by the wool imported from that country.

If the products which were sent to the "Centennial" from all over the world, and from all parts of our own land, have scattered seeds in this way, what startling carpets may greet our eyes this spring!

CINDERELLA'S SLIPPER.

Bangor, Me.

DEAR JACK: Of course you keep posted on the doings of the fairies. If any of the descendants of Cinderella's fairy godmother are with you, will you please ask them about this paragraph, which I cut from a newspaper?

"Was it really a glass slipper by means of which Cinderella triumphed over unnatural relatives and won the hand of the prince? No, that is a philological blunder. The story of Cinderella was a tradition before it was put into print in the French of Charles Perrault. In mediæval French, the phonetic equivalent of *verre* (glass) was *vaire*, a kind of variegated or spotted fur. The first man who turned the spoken into the written legend is answerable for the introduction of *verre* instead of *vaire*, and hence for changing the slipper of the ancient story into the now universally accepted glass slipper. The *verre* is a manifest absurdity; the pretty Cinderella could not have danced in it. The fur slipper, on the contrary, has abundant excuse for its appearance in the story, for was not the wearing of fur and other peltry rigidly forbidden by the sumptuary laws to all but princes and princesses?"

Now, dear Jack, in behalf of my anxious little ones, I ask you—is this true?

Yours truly,

A CONSTANT READER'S MAMMA.

Dear me! This is sad news, indeed. But it might have been expected. The moment a man of inquiring mind gets hold of a fairy story or a legend, he plays the mischief with it. Now, dear mother of a constant reader, if you take Jack's advice, you'll treat this so-called item of information as a base slander. Let it go. The children don't want anything more of that sort. The fellow may pride himself as he pleases on being able to see through a glass slipper,—but it's no credit to him. Why, he'll be trying next to haul down Jack's bean-stalk! He'd better look out!

THE OLDEST ORGAN IN THE COUNTRY.

DEAR LITTLE SCHOOLMA'AM: In these wonderful Centennial times, when people are eagerly bringing forth their ancestors' treasures from trunks and attics, I am sure the children join in the prevailing interest, and would like to hear the history of the oldest organ in the country.

Portsmouth, down by the sea-side in New Hampshire, is quite rich in antiquities, and one of the choicest relics—better to me than the old houses, or the old chairs or china—is the old organ in the Episcopal chapel. We claim that it is the first organ ever brought to America. Many years ago, the facts concerning this organ were collected, and published in some musical journal, and an extract was cut from the paper, and pasted upon the organ. Though the print is yellow with varnish and time, yet in this way the organ is able to tell its own story; and this is, in substance, what it says:

"The organ was built in England, was purchased by Thomas Brattle, Esq., and brought to America in 1713; and was set up in King's Chapel."

You know what a prejudice existed, in the days of our forefathers, against organs. The record admits that the prejudice was not abated in favor of this instrument. Just think of its coming to us as a stranger in a strange land, meeting no cordial reception, but treated to an imprisonment of seven months in the tower of the church! It was finally placed in the church, where it was used until the year 1756. It was then sold to St. Paul Church in Newburyport, where it did active service for eighty years. Then, in 1836, Portsmouth became the home of the old organ; the price paid for it at the time of the last purchase was nearly \$450. For one hundred and sixty-three years its pipes have sounded, and it has not yet wholly lost its sweetness or its usefulness,—not so old that it may not at times be heard accompanying the chants of the church. We like to feel that it has found its home, that the pretty recess of the chapel where it now stands shall forever be its resting-place.

L. B. G.

YOUNG CONTRIBUTORS' DEPARTMENT.

PANSY'S LOVERS.

By A LITTLE GIRL.

Spring-time.

Pansy, little pansy,
Wrapped in velvet hues,
Pansy, little pansy,
Bathed in morning dews;

Pansy, little pansy,
I'm your lover true;
I am gentle Spring-time,
Come to welcome you.

Summer.

Pansy, little pansy,
Art thou here, my sweet,
Waiting for the lover
Thou hast longed to meet?

I am he, my darling,
I am Summer gay;
When I come, my sweetheart,
Spring-time hastens away.

Autumn.

Pansy, little pansy,
Dost thou not know me?
I am glorious Autumn,
Tinting vine and tree.

Pansy, little pansy,
Grant me this one boon,—
Stay with me, my darling,
Winter's coming soon.

Winter.

Pansy, little pansy,
Dost thou love us all?
Then, my darling pansy,
Answer Winter's call.

Pansy, little pansy,
I'm the flowers' night,—
I'll fold you in my arms, pet,
Wrapped in mantles white.

L. D. D.

SOME CALIFORNIA SCENES.

I LIVE in Oakland, California. Last year dear papa took Harry and Wallie, my two brothers, and myself up to the Summit, Donner Lake and Lake Tahoe. We had never seen snow falling until we went to the Summit House, where we arrived by the overland railroad about midnight. When I looked out of the window in the morning, I saw something flying about, and thought it was mosquitoes. I called to papa, who was in the next room, to look at the great number of mosquitoes; he told me I was mistaken, that it was snowing. When we heard this we all jumped up and were soon out in the snow. The snow sheds (called galleries) over the railroad track, and the mountains all around, were white, and the snow was falling in beautiful large flakes like soft white down. But I do not intend to tell you about that trip in this letter.

Pescadero—which, papa says, is the Spanish for fisherman—is a little village near the ocean. On the first of July we all—that is, papa, mamma, aunt Mattie, Harry, Wallie, with my little playmate, Maud, and two ladies and one gentleman, and myself—left Oakland on the eight o'clock train for the wharf at the end of the overland railroad, where we went on the ferry-boat to San Francisco, and from the street-cars to the steam-cars; we left the cars at San Mateo and rode in a four-horse coach to Pescadero; the coach was full inside, and papa, Harry, Maud and I rode on top. The road winds along the sides of mountains to Half-Moon Bay; in some places we were hundreds of feet above the little houses in at the foot of the mountains. We stopped for dinner at Half-Moon Bay, and arrived at Pescadero about five o'clock. The Swanton House was decorated with flags, and a large flag was on a pole in front of the hotel, and ropes, with hundreds of little flags on them, were fastened to the flag-pole and to houses across the streets. We children had each a cen-

tennial flag, which we waved as we drove up to the hotel. We did not stop at the hotel, but had a cottage. There are four beautiful cottages, with a green lawn and trees in front; ours was named "Myrtle," the others were "Ivy," "Oak," and "Fern."

The next morning we went to Pebble Beach, a little beach with a high bank on one side, and large rocks at each end, over which the waves dash with a great booming sound and splash. The beach is covered with beautiful smooth pebbles, white, green, pink and other colors, all washed nice and clean by the waves; some are very beautiful. There are a great many common pebbles, which nobody cares for.

The fun is in hunting for and picking up the nice round colored ones. Everybody squats down, or lies flat down on the beach, and has a little bottle, or box, or something to hold the pebbles; and they scratch over and dig holes in the pebbles to find the prettiest ones. It looks very funny to see thirty or forty people, big and little, squatting or lying down, hunting for pebbles. We children took off our shoes and stockings and ran down the beach when a wave went out, and when a big roller came in we scampered back; we got caught sometimes, and got awful wet, but did not mind it a bit. The sun was very bright, and we all got sunburnt. We went to the beach nearly every day, and brought home several small bottles and boxes full of pebbles. Little Wallie picked up pebbles like the rest, and brought home one of papa's socks full; he and papa empty the pebbles on a paper on the floor, and lie down on the carpet and hunt for the pretty ones, and call it playing "pebble beach."

One day papa, mamma, aunt Mattie, Harry, Wallie, and myself, went in a carriage to Camp Spaulding in the redwoods. It is a lovely place; the trees grow very large and tall. Papa stood up against the end of one that had been sawed off, and it was higher than his head. There were great many larger than that one. The ground was covered with ferns growing five and six feet, and so high and strong we could hardly get through them. Papa and I went up a little cañon where a little stream of water trickled down over the rocks, to look for ferns for his fernery, and we had great sport. The cañon was full of old logs, brush, ferns and weeds, on which we walked; sometimes we would come near slipping through, and sometimes when papa reached up the steep bank for a beautiful fern, his foot would slip and he would slide down among the brush and ferns. We saw great quantities of hazel nuts, but they were not ripe, and we only gathered a few to show to the others at the cottage. On the road we passed a steam saw-mill, where they make boards and shingles from the redwood trees. Great wagon loads of shingles are hauled through Pescadero to the landing by mule teams; the mules have bells on their collars which make a merry jingle in the woods to give notice to people in carriages to stop, as the road through the forest is so narrow in a great many places that two wagons cannot pass each other.

Lizzie.



St. Paul, Minn.

DEAR ST. NICHOLAS: Allow me to present this picture of "The Youthful Rubens Drawing Flies." I drew it as a companion-piece to the Young Contributor pictures—"Father, I Cannot Tell a Lie," and "Sir Isaac Newton Discovering Gravitation," in your June and September numbers of last year.—Your young contributor,

P. N. B.

THE LETTER-BOX.

It is very apparent that Dr. Eggleston's little Fairy Show for Sunday-schools, published in the Christmas number of *St. NICHOLAS*, met a need precisely. We have received, and still are getting, many pleasant letters from delighted young correspondents who saw it played in their schools, or themselves took part in it, and everywhere it has proved a "success." Minnie Whitney writes that the people of her Sunday-school, in Hudson, Mich., "were tired of Christmas trees," so carried out Dr. Eggleston's plan,—"and it was splendid!" In a Wisconsin town they admitted the children free, but charged the fathers and mothers ten cents each, and so cleared almost three times their expenses, besides having a deal of fun. In cities, where the churches were larger, and the best arrangements for getting up and ornamenting the stages most easily procured, the play seems to have excited greater admiration even than in rural towns, less accustomed to theatrical representations, and the dainties from Santa Claus' pack were especially welcomed by the children of the poor, which always collect at the festival of a city Sunday-school. The North Presbyterian church of St. Louis, for example, brought out the Fairy Show in a grand manner, in the presence of over 500 children and a houseful of older people. The pulpit, we are told, was handsomely decorated with evergreen trees, while on the north side was placed a miniature house, about ten feet by six in size, thatched and trimmed with evergreens, tufts of raw cotton and strings of popped corn, and with a veritable-looking chimney. The front of the pulpit was also adorned with evergreens and popped corn. Five hundred and six boxes of candy, each labeled, "A merry Christmas, 1876, from the North Presbyterian Sunday-school," and 1,200 oranges were given away to the little folks, who enjoyed the occasion vastly.

Ripon, Wis.

DEAR *ST. NICHOLAS*: In your December number it is said that the giant Captain Bates and his wife live in Rochester, N. Y. But that is a mistake. They live in Seville, Ohio. I know this because I was visiting my grandma all last summer, who lives in Medina, Ohio, which is only a few miles from Seville. I am nine years old, and have been taking *ST. NICHOLAS* for two years and a half from the news office here, and I like it very much indeed.—Yours truly,

WILLIE B. GEERY.

Philadelphia.

DEAR *ST. NICHOLAS*: Can you inform me why pulling candy makes it change its color.—Yours truly,

JAMES TAFT HATFIELD.

A good question, and one to which we will gladly reply in an early number. Meantime, what do our young correspondents say about it?

Harlem.

DEAR *ST. NICHOLAS*: Although I am not a boy that lives in some queer place that would like to hear about, yet I have something funny to tell you, though it may not seem true.

We have a snake all spotted red and yellow, and we keep it in a glass case till it gets tamer. Yesterday morning we put my little baby sister's whistle in the case, and went away. We did it just for fun, but when we came back, the whistle was gone, and we could not find it anywhere. Just then we heard a queer noise, and when we looked, we found the snake all coiled up and whistling, with a little bit of the wooden whistle sticking out of its mouth. Once I heard of a snake eating two birds and a toad. I would like to know if this could be true.—Yours truly,

TOM C. GRANT.

Bethlehem, Pa., Jan. 6th, 1877.

DEAR *ST. NICHOLAS*: This evening I read a letter in *ST. NICHOLAS* about putres in Bethlehem, and I was very much interested in it, because I live in Bethlehem and am a Moravian. There were a great many putres here this year. On one could be seen the Switchback railroad in the coal regions. On another one we saw a stable, with some angels over it. There were cattle in the barn-yard, and shepherds standing and watching their sheep. We had a tree and a small putre for our dolls. I have a sister, and we both play with our dolls. We got a great many Christmas presents, among them *ST. NICHOLAS*. I like it ever so much, and wish it would come oftener. I am nine years old.—From your little friend,

ERNEST H.

Washington, D. C., Jan. 14th, 1877.

DARLING *ST. NICHOLAS*: As I saw so many little girls were writing, I thought I would send you a few lines to congratulate you on your immense success. I have taken you from your birth, as a writer to your magazine said. I think you are grand, and I hope you will live forever. I like "His Own Master" ever so much. I hope Jacob will marry Flora. I am making up a list of Bird-defenders, and will send it as soon as it is full. Give my best regards to Deacon Green and the Little Schoolma'am, and always remember me as your devoted reader,

MAMIE KING.

Flushing, N. Y.

DEAR *ST. NICHOLAS*: I have a piece of money, on one side of which is: "VICTORIA D: G: BRIT: REG: FID: DEP: MDCCCLVI." On the other side is a British device, and also, "ONE FLORIN. ONE-TENTH OF A POUND." Is this an English, Austrian, Dutch, or Prussian piece of money? How much is it worth?

JOS. F. DARLING.

This is a common English coin, sometimes known as a florin, but usually called a two-shilling piece. It is worth two English shillings.

LILLIE WOLFERSBURGER, HENRY H. SWAIN, AND O. H. B.—The "O" on some coins is only a badly cut "C" (for Carson City). Coins from that mint are sometimes badly stamped, and the C readily becomes an O.

Heidelberg, Germany, November, 1876.

DEAR *ST. NICHOLAS*: I am a very little boy, and I have not been in dear America for four years. I am awfully homesick at times, and would be a great deal more so if it was not that my papa sends me the welcome *ST. NICHOLAS* every month from away out in Michigan. I am in Heidelberg with my two great big brothers, studying German. I go to the public school, and can talk the language here like a Dutchman.

This is a beautiful place, full of lovely drives and walks. We live right under the walls of the old castle, and we walk up to the Konigstuhl often.

The big boys are very bad here, and fight awfully, and try to cut off each other's noses with swords. They have big spotted dogs, as large as calves. You ought to see the German girls dance, with their blue stockings. They are lovely.

They drink an awful lot of lager-beer here. Can you tell them in your nice paper that it is very wrong to drink and fight? I am going home to Grosse Ile, Michigan, next summer. I should like to stop in New York and see you, *ST. NICHOLAS*.—Your friend,

WILLIE S. BIDDLE, JR.

Chicago.

DEAR *ST. NICHOLAS*: I am sick and cannot go out, so I thought I would write you a letter. I have a little dog. He has a ball, and I take it and put it in my pocket. Then he will put his head in, and growl until he gets it out. Then he will run away with it, but bring it back for me to do it again. He will get mamma's slippers and try to chew it up; and if we go after him, he will run and try hard not to be caught. I have two pigeons; they are very tame, because I am kind to them. They like me, and when I go in the coop to feed them, they fly down and eat out of my hand. I am eight years old. I like the "Boy Emigrants" better than any story.

WALTER GARFIELD.

PLEASANT letters have been received from Hugh Toland Carney, Lizzie Spencer, Winnie H., Marie L. Haydel, Kittie Blanche, "Kate," Mamie Kennedy, A. T. C., Julia E. Botsford, Hattie and Anna Mack, Allen Browning, Martha L. Munger, and others.

Fort McKavett, Menard Co., Texas.

DEAR *ST. NICHOLAS*: I am a little girl, ten years old. Occasionally I see letters in your "Letter-Box" from boys and girls living in the army, so I thought I would send you a short letter from Texas. We live at Fort McKavett, one of the best frontier posts in the State. The surrounding country is very pretty. There are five infantry and two cavalry companies stationed here. I have a pony, which I ride nearly every day and enjoy it so much. My papa went on a scout two years ago and brought home this pony; he belonged to the Indians. I think he must have been one of the squaws' ponies, because he is so gentle and likes women better than men around him.

I have a black and tan terrier dog named Nipper, and a cat called Teeny. I could not live away out here without plenty of pets—it is so lonely. I have no brothers or sisters, but there are eighteen officers' children in the garrison, and all under twelve years of age. I have not been North for four years; I am getting tired of living South so long. I enjoy reading ST. NICHOLAS so much, and out here it is doubly welcome. I am afraid I am writing too much, so will close for this time.—I remain one of your best friends,

JANET G. LARKE.

INQUIRY: Can any one tell where to find a little poem on the "Snow," commencing:

"Look at the beautiful flakes of snow,
Where do they come from, whence do they go?

Quietly, silently, gently they fall;
They do not jostle each other at all.
We in the world are not like the snow,
Jostling and pushing wherever we go.

Little Falls, N. Y.

DEAR ST. NICHOLAS: You have come to us ever since your existence, and we would hardly know how to do without you. Sister Grace is away at school, and says you may come in my name another year. Brother says he will pay for a copy to go to our cousins away on the prairies of Nebraska. I think it very kind in him, for it will be so appreciated by them, as they have had a hard time to get along. It seems hardly true that they lived in a hole in the ground when they first went there!

I suppose you are tired of the many letters you get from the readers of ST. NICHOLAS, but, if possible, I would like you to print this little extract, at least, that I read in a paper a few days ago, asking the young French scholars for a translation, or give it yourself, as you wish. It was styled "A Beautiful Truth." "Ce n'est pas la victoire qui fait la joie des nobles cœurs; c'est le combat."

Hoping to see it in the "Letter-Box" soon, I remain your little friend,

SUSIE C. B.

West Union, Iowa, December, 1876.

DEAR ST. NICHOLAS: I am a little boy nine years old. I go to school and study the Third Reader. I like the story of "His Own Master" very much. Papa has taken ST. NICHOLAS for me ever since it was published. I have got a little brother named Robby, and a dog named Frank, and a cat named Slammens. Is n't Slammens a funny name? Mamma named him. It is pretty cold out here in winter. I want to see this in ST. NICHOLAS before I write again.—From your friend,

HARRY TALMADGE.

Louisville, Ky.

DEAR BOYS AND GIRLS OF ST. NICHOLAS: I saw a little girl last summer who never saw ST. NICHOLAS. I felt very sorry for her. She read "dry old books," and stories of astonishingly good children and impossible grown people, and she never had any real, merry romps.

Oh no, she was 'nt a "very poor child," either. She had a great many unnecessary things for a little girl, one of which was a little black girl to wait on her. I thought the little black girl was very funny, and used to laugh at her every day—not because she was black, but because she said such very odd things and often got her words wrong. One morning she said: "John he did n't come home 'tall las' night—leas' ways he never sleep' in he bed, 'cause it's all untangled this momm'." Was she wrong to think when the bed was all made up that it was *untangled*?

Sunday, Bess wanted to do something she was told was wrong, and her mistress said: "Don't you know the Bible says you must not do such things on Sunday?" Bess rolled her great eyes up and said: "Oh! yes, missie, but dey is a heap in things in de Bible what you can't *fill-full*." She saw a small marble bust of Dickens, and she said: "How dis man git he portagraph took so hard n' white? Mus' 'a been awful pale he self, I reckon." Bess kept the flies off the table at meal time. The big fly-brush was fastened over the table, and Bess had to pull a cord to move the brush. I never knew her to get through one meal without going to sleep at her work. She would nod and pull the cord at the same time. It looked as though she had the cord fastened to her head, and pulled it down each time her head came down. It looked very strange to see her sleep standing up and all the time going on with her work. Bess often heard the white people talk of things she did not at all understand, but she would remember the sound and try to use the words afterward. When Bess was sent to do errands away from home, as happened sometimes, she never seemed to have but one idea, and that was to go to the place to which she was sent. Then she seemed to think her errand was done. She was sent to me at another house, one day, and the first I knew of it was when I looked up and saw the queer little thing standing in my room. She had a bright yellow dress on. She never liked any other color. I could not help smiling at her, she looked so contented and

as though her errand was done, although she had not said a word. I knew she had been sent for something, and I said: "Good morning, Bess; what do you want this morning?" She stood perfectly still and rolled her great eyes up and said: "Nuffin." I waited to give her time to think, and then I said: "What did you come for, Bess?" "Nuffin." "Who told you to come?" "Missie." "What did she tell you to do?" "She done tolle me to come straight to your room an' stay till you tolle me to go home again." How was I to get at the message? I knew one had been sent. After a little I said: "What did your mistress tell you to say to me?" "She say tell you to look at my breas'—pin—that's all she say." I looked and found a note fastened by a pin at her throat. I laughed at this and wondered why she could not have carried it in her hand. I found afterward that she lost everything she was trusted to carry. I answered the note and said: "Bess, what shall I do with this note? I want your mistress to have it." With a perfectly indifferent face, and still looking any place but at me, she says: "I do no; 'speck I reckon you better tie it to me." I mout loss it. I took a string and tied the note around her neck like a locket, and she seemed very proud of it. Then I told her to go right back to her mistress and give her the note. She made a queer bow and said: "Yes, miss, I goin'" and she was gone as rapidly and as quietly as she had come. She went to her mistress as she had come to me, and without a word waited to be examined. If you would like to see Bess, and will go with me to Virginia, you can hear her talk. I think you'd laugh a good deal. They are used to her where she lives, and don't think her funny. Bess would be surprised if she knew I had written to you about her.—Yours truly,

M. A. C.

Oakland, Cal.

DEAR ST. NICHOLAS: I am going to write you a receipt for chocolate caramels; I think you will find them very nice:—Quarter pound prepared chocolate; one cup of molasses; one cup of sugar, brown; one cup of milk (or cream); half cup of butter. Boil until done, stirring briskly all the time, and just as it is done put in three or four drops of extract of vanilla. I have not tried Gussie's receipt yet, but I intend to soon. From your affectionate reader,

FIDDLIE M. BELCHER.

Media, Jan. 10th, 1877.

DEAR JACK: In the January ST. NICHOLAS, "M. S." gave a sentence containing five "that's" in order, and asked how it would be parsed. At an examination in our school, some time ago, we had to parse a sentence of a like nature. The first "that" is a conjunction, connecting "Jane said" with the rest of the sentence. The second "that" is a demonstrative pronominal adjective relating to the third "that," which is a noun, subject of the verb "was." The fourth "that" is a relative pronoun, its antecedent being the third "that." The fifth "that" is a demonstrative pronominal adjective, limiting the noun "boy."—Yours truly,

E. N. FUSSELL.

Leavenworth, Kansas.

DEAR ST. NICHOLAS: I have a little anecdote about Kansas rats, that perhaps your readers will enjoy.

During Quantrell's raid, which was in 1864, the town of Lawrence was burned. There were no rats in Topeka. On the day following the fire, they appeared in force, and persons who went over the road between the two places, saw innumerable tracks of little feet, showing that the little quadrupeds had evidently gone in an array from one town to the other. Since that time, there have been plenty of rats both in Topeka and all stations west.—Truly your friend,

MILDRED R. B.

"SANTA CLAUS," of New London, sends this ingeniously rhymed answer to Rebus No. 2 in the January number:

THE WITCHES' SPELL.

This remarkable spell
Is devised very well,
On a truly original plan:
If I've not got it right,
In my guesing-to-night,
Then pray let him "Spell it who can."

In addition to those who were credited last month, the following boys and girls sent answers to puzzles in the December number: Prentiss Dow, Clara Lee, Edith Heard, "Professor," Tellis F. White, Nellie S. Thompson, Howard Steel Rodgers, Thomas Dykes Basye, Mary J. Tilghman, William C. Delaney, Nettie Mack, Benning Swift, S. Decatur Smith, Jr., Mary Brenda Balmair, Nettie Marcellus, Crecy S. Slate, Lizzie Kiernan, "Beth," S. H. Hamilton, Agnes L. Pollard, "M. E. A." and "L. G.," Chas. Burnham, Allen H. Burnham, May Ely, Charlie A. Miller, Kittie M. Blanke, Everett Blanke, Ella Blanke, Leonie M. Milbau, Zella Milbau, Bessie McLaren, Helen Green, Jackie D. W., A. G. Cameron, Edith Lowry, C. H. Delaney, Henry T. Perry, Elinor Louise Smith, "Oliver Twist," "C. A. D.," Clarence M. Trowbridge, and Sheldon Emery.

THE RIDDLE-BOX.

BEHEADED ENIGMAS.

BY A LITTLE GIRL.

1. Do you need a 1, 2, 8, 3, 6 to find the place where you shot the 2, 8, 3, 6? 2. While on our 7, 8, 3, 1, 2, we went under an 8, 3, 1, 2, 3, 6 to go to the 7, 8, 3, 6 in search of 5, 3, 6, 5. There is a stove in your school-house. Do you often 9, 6 by 4, 6? 6. He had best 6, 3, 4, 7 off a little of that 3, 4, 7. 7. He wore the 1, 2, 8, 3, 7 as a protection from 2, 8, 3, 7.

Put the nine letters in their proper order, and find a pleasant holiday.

LIZZIE KIERNAN.

HIDDEN LATIN PROVERB.

FIND in the following sentence a Latin motto for puzzle-guessers: A student so thoroughly patient I admire greatly; he evinces that quality which is the basis of all excellence in scientific knowledge.

J. P. B.

PICTORIAL LIBRARY PUZZLE.

Who are the sixteen authors represented on the shelves



INCOMPLETE SENTENCES.

FILL the blanks in each sentence with words pronounced alike but spelled differently and having different meanings.

1. The —— beauty of that horse is his ——. 2. A fisherman —— hauling in his nets added much to the ——. 3. He —— the helmsman —— the tiller and start across the ——. 4. William —— a boy with a —— to procure for him some ——. 5. He came through the —— with an awkward ——. 6. Once a week the society —— and —— out the —— to the poor. 7. No doubt the ancient —— used their shields for pillows for many ——. 8. I think rats must have —— in this ——, for the corn is all nibbled. 9. They had the —— tied with a chain of enormous ——. 10. Taking a ——, Mary attempted to —— it with a —— of scissors.

STALLKNECHT.

CENTRAL SYNCOPATIONS.

1. SYNCOPATE musical instruments and leave edibles. 2. A series of steps, and leave to arouse. 3. Very important, and leave a bottle. 4. A beautiful substance found in the sea, and leave a useful substance found underground. 5. A vessel, and leave to spill. 6. Pieces of baked clay, and leave fastenings.

The syncopated letters, read down, form an acrostic, meaning a guard.

CYRIL DEANE.

METAGRAM.

WHOLE, I am a river in England. Curtail me, and I am to part. Transpose, and I am a stanza. Omit one letter and transpose, and I am without end. Transpose, and I am to turn aside. Curtail and transpose, and I am a part of the day.

STALLKNECHT.

TRIPLE ACROSTIC.

PRIMALS, centrals, and finals form three animals.

1. A great musician. 2. Part of Oceanica. 3. A shade of color. 4. An earth-worm. 5. A Latin council. 6. A color.

LITTLE ONE.

MELANGE.

1. TRANPOSE a kind of fish, and give the name of a poet; again, and give an article of food; again, and give a pledge. 2. Behead the fish, and leave a girl's name. 3. Syncopate the fish, and leave to satisfy appetite. 4. Behead the article of food, and leave an Oriental tree. 5. Behead the pledge, and leave to seize. 6. Transpose to satisfy appetite, and find a residence. 7. Curtail the Oriental tree, and find a beverage. 8. Behead the residence, and find what we all do.

ISOLA.

EASY DIAMOND PUZZLE.

1. A consonant. 2. A young animal. 3. A wild animal. 4. A domestic animal. 5. A consonant.

ISOLA.

DOUBLE ACROSTIC.

1. ANGER. 2. A peculiar substance, obtained from certain seaweeds, or marine plants. 3. More recent. 4. An animal. 5. Empty. 6. One who entertains. 7. A small period of time. Primals and finals, read down, give two boys' names.

Behead and curtail each word, and the following will remain: 1. An animal. 2. An ancient god. 3. A heathen goddess. 4. A verb. 5. A girl's nickname. 6. To ponder. 7. A sign.

CYRIL DEANE.

HIDDEN FRENCH PROVERB.

FIND a French proverb in the following sentence which may teach us to be charitable in our judgment of others!

Do I prefer Valenciennes to Honiton lace? O! it seems quite malicious, Amy, to ask me; but I will relieve your suspense, and say "Yes."

B.

HALF WORD-SQUARE.

1. A FAR Western State. 2. A report. 3. To cast forth. 4. Possessed. 5. A conjunction.

LITTLE ONE.

OMNIBUS WORD.

WHAT word of five letters contains:

I.—Two word-squares. First: 1. An animal. 2. A vegetable. 3. An organ of the body. Second: 1. What the hungry desire to do. 2. A verb. 3. A beverage.

II.—A diamond puzzle. 1. A consonant. 2. A period of time. 3. To preach. 4. What the hungry did do. 5. A vowel.

III.—Words which, transposed, will fill the blanks in the following sentence properly: We must —— up every ——, or they will spoil the crop if they grow at this ——.

IV.—Four reversible words. 1. A state of equality; reversed, a knock. 2. A stratagem; reversed, a portion. 3. A light blow; reversed, to mend a shoe. 4. An animal; reversed, a resinous substance.

V.—Words meaning: 1. Duplicity. 2. Quick. 3. Carried away by excitement or wonder. And a prefix and a preposition.

H. H. D.

REBUS.



ANSWERS TO PUZZLES IN FEBRUARY NUMBER.

HOUR-GLASS PUZZLE.—Innocence.

O B D I F F E N C E
L E A N I N G
H O N O R
T O E
C
F E E
D O N O R
S P E C T E R
P E R F E T U L

ANAGRAMS OF CITIES.—1. New Castle. 2. Charleston. 3. New Orleans. 4. Syracuse. 5. Montreal. 6. Providence. 7. St. Augustine. 8. Portsmouth.

MATHEMATICAL PUZZLE.—Mild.

PICTORIAL NUMERICAL REBUS.—
23,008
8,945
82,000,000,808
49,000,006
82,049,032,767

DIFFICULT DIAMOND PUZZLE.—Indistinguishable.

I
I N N
L E D G E
H O L I D A Y
F O R E S I G H T
R E C E P T A C L E S
P R E M E D I T A T I O N
R E P R E S E N T A T I O N S
I N D I S T I N G U I S H A B L E
S O N M A B U L A T I O N S
I N V E S T I G A T I O N
H U R R Y S K U R R Y
S H E P H E R D S
M I R A C L E
S A B L E
A L E
E

ENIGMA.—Paris.

DOUBLE MEANINGS.—1. Racine. 2. Rouen (ruin). 3. Cork. 4. Buffalo. 5. Toure. 6. Lyons. 7. Lancaster (lark aster).

NUMERICAL ENIGMA.—"Idle folks have the most labor."

PICTORIAL PUZZLE.—Plum, Lime, Date, Prickly-pear.

DOUBLE ACROSTIC.—Paris. Genoa.

P — G
A — lo — E
R — ai — N
I — ndig — O
S — ahar — A

ANSWERS TO PUZZLES IN THE JANUARY NUMBER were received, previous to January 18th, from Fred S. Pickett, Arthur D. Smith, Harry K. Merritt, Lydia W. Brown, "Santa Claus," Sadie Hamilton, Frieda E. Lippert, Josie Morris Brown, "Alma," Addie Guon, Henrv A. Bostwick, Jr., M. S. R., "Pandora," M. H. S., Brainerd P. Emery, Harry Nathan, Horace Read Keay, Alma Bertram, Nellie May Sherwin, J. B. T., Nessie E. Stevens, "Alex," Nellie Emerson, "Oliver Twist," "Norma," Louis Rodman, Lilla Coggeshall, L. Harry Nyce, Alice B. McElwain, Charles Hart Payne, Annie M. Horton, S. N. Knapp, Chas. G. Case, Frank Frick, Ella G. Condie, "Frederic," Thomas Hunt, Jr., Nellie B. Baker, Alice M. Reising, Clara Lee, Howard Steel Rodgers, Nelly Chase, "Beth," Emma Elliott, M. W. Collet, "Yankee Doodle," Louis W. Ford, "Lizzie and Annie," Arthur F. Stone, Grace H. Miller, Alfred S. De Witt, Genevieve Allis, Sadie Hamilton, Fred Richardson, Willie Dibblee, Eleanor N. Hughes, "Golden Eagle," Marion A. Coombs, Willie Glover, Mary F. Speiden, M. Louise Cross, "Mercury," Mamie A. Rich, Edith Lowry, "Telemachus," Dee L. Lodge, Katie S. Wright, "Professor," E. D., Bessie S. B. Benedict, "Apollo," Ora L. Dowty, Arthur C. Smith, Willie R. Lighton, "General Butterfingers," S. S. B. R., "John C. Robertson, Herbert C. Taylor, Lizzie Wilson, Jennie Wilson, Gertrude Hill, Mildred Pope, Oliver Everett, Willie L. Thomas, Ellen M. Field, Ella L. Reed, Edwin C. Garrigues, "Perseverance," Blanche L. Turner, A. G. Cameron, Thos. W. Fry, H. C. Taylor, Leroy W. Nind, Katie Brown, Eddie Vultee, George Herbert White, Bessie McLaren, Helen Green, Amy Shriner, Carroll L. Maxey, George B. Titworth, Lena W. Chamberlain, W. C. Spencer, and W. Irving Spencer.

NOVEL DIAMOND PUZZLE.—
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T

SQUARE-WORD.—
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O P A L
S A I L
E L L A

PICTURE PUZZLE.—1. It is a ball (bawl). 2. It is a wet season. 3. Criers. 4. It is an overflow of salt water. 5. Because their hands are together. 6. Because they are in tiers (tears). 7. She needs to unbend. 8. It is upbraided. 9. They are in arms. 10. His elbows are out. 11. "Ise hid" (eyes hid).

REBUS.—"Kind hearts are more than coronets, And simple faith than Norman blood."

HIDDEN WORDS.—Ragout, gout, ou, si, de, te, en, le, combat, bat, bacon, ton, on, Lyon, ont, fi, fel, the.

DIAMOND PUZZLE.—
S I P
S T A R E
D I A M O N D
P R O U D
E N D
D

RIDDLE.—Fire, ire, fir.

EASY ENIGMA.—Aversion, a version, aver, Sion.

DIAMOND PUZZLE.

A P E
S P E C T R E
E N T R Y
T R Y
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EASY DOUBLE DIAGONAL PUZZLE.—Agate, Slate.

A R I E S
A G I L E
D E A C H
S T A T E
E Y R I E

BEHEADED RHYMES.—Prelate, relate, elate, late, ate.

CONCEALED DIAMOND AND WORD-SQUARE.—
B

T O E
B O N E S
E E L

8
CROSS-WORD ENIGMA.—Yorktown.

METAGRAM.—Ada, Adam, madam, mad, lad, bad, a.

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AUNT CARRIE WINDS THE CLOCK.

(See "Sam Clemson, the Second.")